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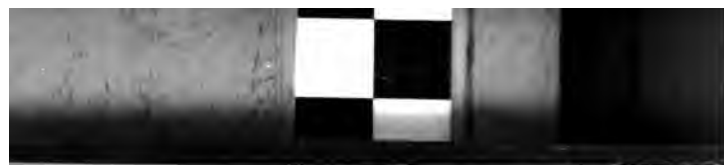
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THE HISTORY
OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
IN
THE REVOLUTION
1775-1780

BY
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A MEMBER OF THE BAR OF CHARLESTON, S.C., AND PRESIDENT
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AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF SOUTH CAROLINA UNDER THE PROPRIETARY
GOVERNMENT" AND "THE HISTORY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
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HISTORY OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN THE REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I

1775

THE battle of Lexington in 1775 precipitated the war of the Revolution, (just as that of Fort Sumter in 1861 did the War of Secession) and although the condition of affairs rendered the commencement of hostilities in each of these cases imminent, if not inevitable, each party sought to throw the blame of beginning the war upon its opponent. But when public affairs have reached the pass that armed men confront each other, it is useless to ask who struck the first blow. Neither party will forbear to strike when it sees its advantage to do so. Nor does the striking in such cases always depend upon the volition of either of the parties who so stand before each other; an accident may at any time bring on the collision.

The American colonies were not prepared or ready to commit themselves to hostilities when the excitement or mistake of one, or of both, of the parties brought on the battle of Lexington. And so it was that rather than boast of and glory in this, the initiatory act of the war, as Americans now do, both the British and Americans disowned it, and took immediate steps to demonstrate to the world, and to perpetuate the testimony, that they severally were not the aggressors. The British officers alleged that they were fired on from a stone wall before they attacked the

militia company at Lexington ; while on the part of the Americans numerous depositions were taken, all going to prove that both at Lexington and at the bridge near Concord the first fire was received by them ; and care was taken to lay these depositions before the Continental Congress as early as possible, when that body met in May.¹ So, too, the intelligence of the capture of Ticonderoga was immediately communicated to Congress, and the resolution adopted in consequence furnishes, says Marshall, strong evidence of the solicitude felt by that body to exonerate the government in the opinion of the people at large from all suspicion of aggression, or of provoking a continuance of the war by transcending the limits of self-defence.² Even after the battle of Bunker Hill had been fought the Continental Congress sent "a decent, dutiful, and truly filial petition" to the king by the hands of Governor Penn of Pennsylvania, who, being called to its bar and examined by the House of Lords, thereon absolutely denied the charge that any designs of independency had been formed by Congress, and assured that body that the war was levied and carried on by the colonists merely in defence of what they thought their liberties ; adding, however, that the spirit of resistance was general, and that the colonists believed themselves able to defend those liberties against the arms of Great Britain.³

Such, at the time of the arrival of Lord William Campbell, Governor of South Carolina, was the extreme position of the revolutionists in the province.⁴

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. II, 200, 207.

² *Ibid.*, 205, 206.

³ *Annual Register*, vol. XIX (1776), 95 ; Gordon's *Amer. War*, vol. II, 231.

⁴ Lord William Campbell was the third brother of the Duke of Argyle, and had married Miss Sarah Izard, daughter of Ralph Izard of South Carolina. See *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 709, 794.

It will be remembered that the Provincial Congress, which upon the receipt of the news of the battle of Lexington had been reconvened upon the 4th of June, 1775, that day being a Sunday, after divine service had been performed before it, had organized an Association which was practically a provisional government of the people. The instrument embodying this government having been prepared, was with great solemnity then signed by Henry Laurens, (President of the Congress, and after the President) each member had affixed his name, whereby he bound himself under every tie of religion and honor to stand with his fellow-members as a band in defence of South Carolina against any foe, solemnly engaging that whenever the Continental or Provincial Councils should deem it necessary, they would go forth ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to secure her freedom and safety. This was the first independent or revolutionary government set up in any of the colonies.

To carry on this government the Congress before it adjourned had appointed three committees and a Council of Safety, to which it had delegated large and comprehensive powers.

1. There was the *General Committee* composed for convenience of the representatives in that body from Charlestown, as they could easily be convened for the despatch of business, and also of such other members of the Congress as happened at any time to be in the town, who were required to attend. This body was both judicial and executive. It was its function to explain the regulations of Congress — a vast power in itself — and to cause them to be executed. The immediate representative of the town had jurisdiction as to the collection of debts. A subcommittee of Inspection was formed to take cognizance of the arrival of vessels and of cargoes, and also of the

conduct of the people, and to report thereon to the General Committee, whose directions they were to obey. The representatives of the parishes and districts composed their local committees, and they were also assisted by committees of Inspection.¹

2. The *Secret Committee* of five persons, which had been appointed on the 16th of January, under a resolution couched in the following general terms, "calculated," as it was said, "to bear ample construction for the public service."

"Resolved that a secret committee of five proper persons be appointed by the President of this Congress to procure and distribute such articles as the present insecure state of the interior parts of this colony renders necessary for the better defence and security of the good people of those parts *and other necessary purposes*. Resolved that this Congress will indemnify and support the said committee in all their doings touching the premises."²

The members of the committee were: William Henry Drayton, Arthur Middleton, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, William Gibbes, and Edward Weyman.

3. On the 3d of May a private letter had been received from Arthur Lee in London, intimating that a plan had been laid before the Royal government for instigating the negroes to insurrection, which seems to have been believed, and to have been regarded as more alarming because it was known that some of the negroes entertained the idea that the contest was for their emancipation. To meet, therefore, whatever might arise, a *Special Committee* was appointed to form such plans as they should think immediately necessary to be carried into execution "for the security of the good people of the colony." The members of the committee were: William Henry Drayton,

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 175.

² *Ibid.*, 221; *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrary), 786.

Barnard Elliott, George Gabriel Powell, William Tennent, Arthur Middleton, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, William Gibbes, John Huger, Edward Weyman, Thomas Lynch, Jr., and Thomas Bee.¹ This committee, it will be observed, was but an enlargement of the Secret Committee just mentioned.

4. On the 14th of June a *Council of Safety* was called into existence. This council was vested with supreme power over the army, the militia, and all military affairs; in fact, they were the executive government of the colony, though the powers of the *General Committee* do not appear to have been abridged. To this council was delegated authority to grant commissions, suspend officers, order court martials, direct, regulate, maintain, and order the army and all military establishments, and of drawing on the Treasury for all purposes of public service.² The Council of Safety consisted of the following gentlemen: Henry Laurens, Charles Pinckney, Rawlins Lowndes, Thomas Ferguson, Miles Brewton, Arthur Middleton, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Thomas Bee, John Huger, James Parsons, William Henry Drayton, Benjamin Elliott, and William Williamson.

The powers and jurisdiction of these various committees were very indefinite, and in some instances conflicting. But they were composed of the same set of men, several of whom were on more than one; William Henry Drayton and Arthur Middleton were upon all of them.

Vigorous measures were now taken to enforce the government thus set up, to the exclusion of that of his Majesty's, which now, though having a full complement of officers, civil and military, was stripped of all but the

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 231.

² *Ibid.*, 255. William Henry Drayton claimed that this was the origin of Councils of Safety in the colonies. *Ibid.*, Introduction, xviii, xix.

mere semblance of power. All non-subscribers to the Association, — that is, all who would not join in the new order — were made amenable to the General Committee, and by them punishable according to "*sound policy*." Those who violated or refused obedience to the authority of the Congress were made amenable before the parochial and district committees, and upon their being found guilty, and proving contumacious, were to be declared inimicable to the liberties of America, and objects for the public resentment. All absentees holding estates in this colony, except those who were abroad on account of their health, and those under sixty years of age and above twenty-one, were called upon forthwith to return, and no persons holding estates in the colony were permitted to withdraw from its service without giving good and sufficient reasons for doing so.¹

On the 18th of June, 1775, his Excellency, Lord William Campbell, the newly appointed Royal Governor, landed in Charlestown. With the tacit permission of the Council of Safety the militia were drawn up to receive him ; but there was no *feu de joie* as had been usual on such an occasion ; neither was there any loud and hearty acclaim of citizens when his commission as Governor was publicly read before him from the portico of the Exchange. The citizens, for the most part, preserved a sullen silence. Notwithstanding his connection with the colony, no private gentlemen awaited his Excellency's landing, nor attended his parade along the streets, as was customary. He was received only by the colonel of the militia, and the placemen counsellors, including the chief justice and associate judges, the collector of the port and clerks of council and of the courts, and some officers of his Majesty's ship, the *Scorpion*, then in the harbor.

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 236.

The whole of the escort did not exceed fifteen persons. Lieutenant Governor Bull had not even come down from Ashley Hall to receive his Excellency, though they were, no doubt, well acquainted personally. Lady Campbell was part owner with her sister of one of the finest residences in the town, which still stands in Meeting Street, nearly opposite Ladson Street, which his Excellency was to occupy ; but as it was not then ready for their reception, his Excellency and his lady accepted the hospitality of Miles Brewton,¹ their connection, and took up their temporary residence in his mansion on King Street, the same in which Josiah Quincy had been entertained by Brewton two years before.² Miles Brewton had, as we have seen, just been appointed one of the Council of Safety of the revolutionary party.

Three days after his arrival, that is, on the 21st of June, a deputation from the Provincial Congress, headed by William Henry Drayton, and of which the Governor's host, Miles Brewton, was one, waited on his Excellency and presented to him an address. This address is important as indicating the temper and purpose which still animated the people generally, even those who were active in resisting the government. It opens with a description of the representatives of the people of the colony in Congress assembled as "his Majesty's loyal subjects," and begs leave to disclose to his Excellency the true causes of their present proceedings, that upon his arrival among them he might receive no unfavorable impressions of their conduct.

"We declare," the address proceeds, "that no love of innovation — no desire of altering the constitution of Government — no lust of

¹ Miles Brewton had married Mary, daughter of Joseph Izard, who was a first cousin of Lady Campbell.

² *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 706.

independence, has had the least influence upon our counsels; but alarmed and roused by a long succession of arbitrary proceedings, by wicked administrations — impressed with the greatest danger of instigated insurrections, and deeply affected by the commencement of hostilities by the British troops against this continent — solely for the preservation and in defence of our lives, liberties, and properties, we have been impelled to associate and to take up arms."

By this address the Congress declared that the people wished for nothing more ardently than a speedy reconciliation with their mother country upon constitutional principles. They again professed their loyal attachment to their sovereign, his crown and dignity; and thought it their duty to declare these things that his Excellency, and through his Excellency their august sovereign, their fellow-subjects, and the whole world might clearly understand that their taking up arms was the result of a dire necessity. They entreated his Excellency to assure his Majesty that in the midst of all their complicated distresses he had no subjects who more sincerely desired to testify their loyalty and affections or who would be more willing to devote their lives and fortunes in his real service.

His Excellency had had twenty-four hours' notice that this address would be presented to him, and he received it. In his reply he said he knew of no representatives of the people of the province except those constitutionally convened in the General Assembly; that he was incompetent to judge of the disputes which, unhappily, existed between Great Britain and the American colonies; that it was impossible during the short interval since his arrival that he should have acquired such a knowledge of the state of the province as to enable him to make any representation thereupon to his Majesty; but that no representation should ever be made by him inconsistent with

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truth and an earnest endeavor to promote the real happiness and prosperity of the province.

Lord William Campbell was, indeed, in a most embarrassing position. His wife's relations were all more or less embarked in the American cause. Her brothers, Ralph and Walter Izard, were committed to it, and their cousin Ralph Izard, Jr., then in Europe, had been one of those living in London who had gotten up the petition to the King the year before against the passage of the Boston Port bill, and was now actively assisting the cause and only remaining abroad at the instance of the leaders here who thought he might be more useful in Europe. His Lordship had received the address from this revolutionary body, and had respectfully replied to it, though fully aware of its contents a day before it was presented. He had hardly done so, however, before he began to repent. The words "*and take up arms*" and "*our taking up arms*" now struck him with great alarm, and he began to fear he had made a mistake in receiving the paper at all. He was much disturbed, and long discussed it with his host Mr. Brewton, who, though one of the Council of Safety, was himself in great doubt as to the course which events were taking. Lord William could not sleep for anxiety, and in the night called up Mr. Brewton, who had retired, to express his apprehension that these words would cause troops to be immediately sent to the colony. He entreated Mr. Brewton to use his best endeavor to cause these obnoxious words to be erased from the proceedings of the Provincial Congress and from the address which had been delivered to him, and to substitute some less objectionable phrases. He was, he said, willing to be sworn to secrecy, if the words were changed. Impressed alike by the Governor's fears and his own, Mr. Brewton approached three or four members of the Congress; but as

objection was at once made, it was thought better to drop the matter rather than allow the Governor's doubtful conduct to become the subject of public discussion.¹

The Provincial Congress had, as we have seen, determined to organize a military force of three regiments. It will be useful as well as interesting to glance at the military organization at the time. The province was then divided into twelve military districts, to wit:—

1. Charlestown.
2. Berkeley County.
3. Granville County, *i.e.* the present counties of Beaufort and Hampton.
4. Craven County, the country generally north of the Santee, and east of the Camden District.
5. Colleton County, the country between Charlestown and Granville County.
6. *Orangeburgh*, the present counties of Orangeburg, Barnwell, Lexington, and Aiken.
7. *The Cheraws*, the country east of Lynch's Creek adjoining Craven County, the Pee Dee Section, the present counties of Chesterfield, Marlboro, Darlington, and Marion.
8. *Ninety-Six*, the country between the Saluda and Savannah rivers, the present counties of Edgefield, Abbeville, and Anderson.
9. *Camden*, the country between Lynch's Creek and the Congaree, the present counties of Richland, Kershaw, Sumter, Fairfield, and Chester.
10. *The Forks of Saluda*, the lower part of the country between the Saluda and Broad, that is, the present counties of Newberry, Laurens, and Union.
11. *Upper Saluda*, the present counties of Spartanburg, Laurens, and Union.

¹ *Memoirs of the Am. Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 262, 263.

12. *The New District, or New Acquisition*, the present county of York. In each of these districts the militia was organized into a Regiment of Infantry.

Besides which there was a Regiment of Horse in the lower part of the province, but we have no definition of its territorial limits. The different regiments varied in number according to the population. In 1770 Lieutenant Governor Bull reports the militia at ten thousand, Wells's *Register and Almanac* for 1774 gives the number in 1773 as thirteen thousand. Dr. George Milligan, Chief Surgeon of the forces, estimated them at fourteen thousand.¹ There was a small garrison or guard at Fort Johnson of six men under a commander, or governor as he was called ; there was a commander of each of the two bastions in the town, Broughton's and Lyttleton's, but there is no mention of any guard to them ; the appointment was probably merely nominal. For several years the militia of the town were drilled at these batteries and at Fort Johnson.² An independent company or guard was stationed at Fort Charlotte on the Savannah, near New Bordeaux in Ninety-Six, and probably also at Fort Moore, near the present site of the city of Augusta.³

¹ *A Chapter on the Colonial History of the Carolinas* (W. J. Rivers), 67.

² *Government of the Colony of So. Ca. (Militia)*, Johns Hopkins University Studies, 13 Series, I, II (Whitney), 92-93.

³ In Wells's *Register and Almanac* for 1775 we find the following roster of the militia and military posts : —

Provincial Militia, consisting of Thirteen Regiments, viz. : —

One Regiment of Horse.

Colonel : William Moultrie ; Lieutenant Colonel : — ; Major : —.

Twelve Regiments of Foot.

Charlestown. Colonel : Charles Pinckney ; Lieutenant Colonel : James Parsons ; Major : William Savage ; Captains : Paul Townsend, Maurice Simons, John McCall, Jun., Edward Simons, Peter Leger, MacCartan Campbell, Roger Smith, Philotheos Chiffelle, Charles Motte ; Lieutenants : Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Samuel Legaré, John Brewton,

In the divided condition of popular opinion, even upon the coast, and the great opposition to the revolutionary

Robert Ladson, Thomas Inglis, Alexander Moultrie, John McQueen, John Smyth, James Peronneau, William Glen, Thomas Phepoe, Benjamin Legaré; *Ensigns*: Benjamin Dickinson, John Mathews, John Blake, Keating Simons, Peter Smith, James Wakefield, John Baddely; *Adjutant*: John Smith; *Surgeon General*: Dr. John Haly; *Surgeon to Grenadier Company*: Dr. Thomas Tudor Tucker; *Surgeon to the Light Infantry Company*: Dr. Tucker Harris.

Artillery Company. Owen Roberts, *Captain*; Barnard Beekman, *Captain Lieutenant*; Barnard Elliott, Thomas Grimball, Jr., *Lieutenants*; Benjamin Huger, Thomas Heyward, Jr., Edward Rutledge, *Lieutenant Fireworkers*; Rev. Robert Smith, *Chaplain*.

Berkeley County. Richard Singleton, *Colonel*; George Padon Bond, *Lieutenant Colonel*; Stephen Miller, *Major*.

Granville County. Stephen Bull of Sheldon, *Colonel*; Benjamin Garden, *Lieutenant Colonel*; John Lewis Bourquin, *Major*.

Craven County. Job Rothmahler, *Colonel*; Daniel Horry, *Lieutenant Colonel*; — *Major*.

Colleton County. Joseph Glover, *Colonel*; Samuel Elliott, *Lieutenant Colonel*; James La Roche, *Major*.

Orangeburgh. William Thomson, *Colonel*; Christopher Rowe, *Lieutenant Colonel*; Lewis Golson, *Major*.

Cheraus. George Gabriel Powell, *Colonel*; Charles Augustus Steward, *Lieutenant Colonel*; Abraham Buckholts, *Major*.

Ninety-Six. John Savage, *Colonel*; James Mayson, *Lieutenant Colonel*; Andrew Williamson, *Major*.

Camden. Richard Richardson, *Colonel*; James McGirth, *Lieutenant Colonel*; Samuel Cantey, *Major*.

Forks of Saluda. Robert Starke, *Colonel*; Moses Kirkland, *Lieutenant Colonel*; — Tyrrel, *Major*.

Upper Saluda. Thomas Fletchall, *Colonel*; John Lisle, *Lieutenant Colonel*; John Caldwell, *Major*.

New District. Thomas Neel, *Colonel*; Ezekiel Polk, *Lieutenant Colonel*; Joseph Robinson, *Major*.

Forts and Garrisons, etc.

Colonel Probart Howarth, *Governor* of Fort Johnson.

George Milligan, Esq., *Chief Surgeon* to all the garrisons for his Majesty's forces in the province; John Mackie, John Cleiland, *Surgeon Mates*.

• Jeremiah Terry.

movement in the upper country, it was manifest to the Provincial Congress that no reliance could be placed upon the regularly organized militia to carry out their purposes, as the militia would necessarily embrace men of all shades of political opinion. It was determined, therefore, to organize a force independent of that body. According to our present ideas, it would be supposed that volunteers would have been called for, and organized into regiments to take the field — a force in which the best men of all classes would serve in the ranks if necessary from motives of patriotism. Five years later we shall see a purely volunteer system springing into existence in South Carolina after the fall of Charlestown and the loss of the Continental army, and we shall see the redemption of the State begun by volunteers serving without pay under Sumter, Marion, and Pickens ; but the Provincial Congress had no idea of such a system. Their plan was the organization of a regular force officered by gentlemen, the rank and file of which was to be formed of men enlisted for hire, such as the regular armies of Europe, the ranks of which later we shall see filled up by vagrants and offenders against the law, sentenced thereto by the courts. Gentlemen of fortune and family at once offered themselves as candidates for commissions, and the Congress proceeded to choose these by ballot. Two of the regiments now raised were to be of the line, and designed for service principally on the coast. The Third Regiment

Hon. William Henry Drayton, Esq., *Commander of Broughton's bastion, Charlestown.*

Edward Savage, Esq., *Commander of Lyttleton's bastion, Charlestown.*

George Whitefield, Esq., *Captain*, and John Louis du Mesnil de St. Pierre, *Lieutenant*, of Fort Charlotte.

John Poaug, Esq., *Keeper of all his Majesty's ordnance, stores, etc., and Barrack Master of Charlestown.*

to be recruited in the upper country was to be a regiment of Rangers, or mounted infantry, and designed for service in that region.¹ Christopher Gadsden was chosen

¹ The roster of officers chosen for these regiments was as follows: —

First Regiment. Colonel: Christopher Gadsden; *Lieutenant Colonel*, Isaac Huger; *Major*: Owen Roberts.

Second Regiment. Colonel: William Moultrie; *Lieutenant Colonel*: Isaac Motte; *Major*: Alexander McIntosh.

Third Regiment. *Lieutenant Colonel*: William Thomson; *Major*: James Mayson.

Company Officers of First and Second Regiments. *Captains*: 1, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney; 2, Barnard Elliott; 3, Francis Marion; 4, William Cattell; 5, Peter Horry; 6, Daniel Horry; 7, Adam McDonald; 8, Thomas Lynch, Jr.; 9, William Scott; 10, John Barnwell; 11, Nicholas Eveleigh; 12, James McDonald; 13, Isaac Harleston; 14, Thomas Pinckney; 15, Francis Huger; 16, William Mason; 17, Edmund Hyrne; 18, Roger P. Sanders; 19, Benjamin Cattell; 20, Charles Motte. *First Lieutenants*: 1, Anthony Ashby; 2, James Ladson; 3, John Vanderhorst; 4, John Mouat; 5, Thomas Elliott; 6, William Oliphant; 7, Glen Drayton; 8, Joseph Ioor; 9, Robert Armstrong; 10, John Blake; 11, Alexander McQueen; 12, James Peronneau; 13, Richard Shubrick; 14, Richard Fuller; 15, Richard Singleton; 16, John Allen Walter; 17, Benjamin Dickinson; 18, William Charnock; 19, Thomas Lesesne; 20, Thomas Moultrie. *Second Lieutenants*: 21, Daniel Mazyck; 22, George Turner; 23, Ephraim Mitchell; 24, Henry Hughes; 25, Jacob Shubrick; 26, Simeon Theus; 27, John Farr; 28, Thomas Dunbar; 29, Press Smith; 30, —; 31, George Eveleigh; 32, William Moultrie; 33, Philip Neyle; 34, Thomas Hall; 35, Henry Gray; 36, Isaac Du Bose; 37, Joseph Elliott; 38, Joseph Jenkins; 39, William Hext; 40, —.

Regiment of Rangers. *Captains*: 1, Samuel Wise; 2, Ezekiel Polk; 3, John Caldwell; 4, Ely Kershaw; 5, Robert Goodwyn; 6, Moses Kirkland; 7, Edward Richardson; 8, Thomas Woodward; 9, John Purves. *First Lieutenants*: 1, John Lewis Peyer Imhoff; 2, Charles Heatley; 3, Alan Cameron; 4, Richard Winn; 5, John Donaldson; 6, Hugh Middleton; 7, Lewis Dutarque; 8, Francis Boykin; 9, Samuel Watson. The Council of Safety issued nine blank commissions for second lieutenants in the regiment, which were filled up by Colonel Thomson as follows: Felix Warley, Richard Brown, Samuel Taylor, William Martin, David Hopkins, Joseph Pledger, Thomas Charlton, John Woodward, and William Mitchell.

Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. I, 35–37; *Coll. Hist. of Soc. So. Ca.*, vol. II, 26–27; *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 1775.

Colonel of the First, William Moultrie of the Second, and William Thomson Lieutenant Colonel of the Third Regiment. But although these regiments were to be raised for hire, and the Provincial Congress undertook to provide pay, clothing, and maintenance to the amount of £140,000 sterling, that body prudently avoided laying any tax or designating any particular fund for sinking the currency to be issued for the purpose. To defray the expenses bills of credit were issued which, though not a legal tender in law, and founded on nothing but the consent and zeal of the people, retained their credit for eighteen months, and answered every purpose of a circulating medium. The raising of troops to resist the government would seem to have been as treasonable a measure as could be conceived. And yet the Provincial Congress not only hesitated to commit itself by levying taxes to support the troops it had determined to raise, but stood also upon another curious point. We are told that when it was proposed to issue commissions under seal for the officers they had chosen, a great majority of the Council would not hear of anything looking so independent, for which reason they only issued certificates expressing that "*In pursuance* of the resolution of the Provincial Congress A—— B—— is colonel, &c., of such a regiment, &c." These certificates were signed by members of the Council of Safety present.¹

This force was said by William Henry Drayton to have been the first regular forces raised on the Continent. *Ibid.*, Introduction, xviii.

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 265. This fear of the use of a seal was probably a survival of the regard, and almost superstition, with which the Great Seal of England was regarded, as exhibited by the Parliamentarian, when Littleton, the Lord Keeper, following his royal master Charles I, carried off the Great Seal, and thus for a time puzzled and hampered the Commons, who could scarcely conceive that anything could be done unless that emblem of authority lay upon the Lord Keeper's desk.

But while raising this body of regular troops the militia organization was not abandoned. The militia colonels throughout the colony were ordered to cause the several companies in their respective regiments to be divided into three divisions, one-third of whom, drawn by lot, should hold themselves in readiness to march on twelve hours' notice, another third when called upon, and the other to remain for the protection of their respective districts.¹ The working of this system in practice appears to have been the formation of companies of volunteers to respond to calls as above, instead of the selection by lot, and under this arrangement volunteer companies were formed very generally through the low country, and to some extent in the upper. As these companies were, however, only to be called upon for special services, they formed no such body of troops as the volunteers upon either side of the war between the States in 1861-65, or in the late Spanish war; nor indeed did they practically take any considerable part in the Revolution.

One of the first measures of General Washington upon his arrival at Boston and assuming command of the colonial forces there was to call for a report of the ammunition on hand, and the report had stated 303 barrels in store. A few days after, however, the alarming discovery was made that there was in reality on hand only 9940 pounds, not more than sufficient to furnish each man with nine cartridges. The mistake had been made in reporting the whole which had been originally furnished by the province of Massachusetts, and not estimating what had already been expended in the skirmishes around Boston. All the colonial governments and committees, as well as the Continental Congress, were at once earnestly appealed to to send to Washington every pound of powder or lead which

¹ *Coll. Hist. Soc. of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 59.

could be spared. "No quantity, however small," they were assured, "was beneath notice."¹

South Carolina was called upon to assist. A vessel arrived from Philadelphia laden with Indian corn, as a device by which a letter was brought from the delegates of the province in Congress dated the 1st of July, 1775, addressed to William Henry Drayton, Arthur Middleton, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, members of the Secret Committee, stating that the vessel was sent by direction of the Continental Congress for gunpowder, and entreating the committee to purchase all the powder that could be bought, and to dispatch back the vessel with all possible speed. But how could the committee comply with the requisition? The folly of the non-importation plan had prevented any powder from coming in from abroad in exchange for rice — for even the exportation of this article, which, as we have seen, had been excepted from the general prohibition, had been since prohibited by the Provincial Congress.² How could the committee obtain gunpowder when they could export nothing to exchange for it? The opportunity of doing so was, however, singularly afforded — an opportunity which was at once seized upon, and the object most skilfully and gallantly accomplished.

John Stuart, whose romantic story has been told in a former volume,³ was now the General Agent and Superintendent of his Majesty's Indian Affairs for the southern district, comprehending Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, and as such by his Majesty's special writs of mandamus had a seat in the Council of each of these provinces. His influence over the Indians

¹ *Marshall's Life of Washington*, vol. II, 243.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 255.

³ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 347, 349.

was extensive and imposing, and for some time it had been suspected that he was exercising this influence against the American cause. Information apparently confirming this suspicion having been received by the Secret Committee and laid before the Provincial Congress when that body met on the 4th of June, Mr. Stuart suddenly left Charlestown and went to Savannah. From that place Mr. Stuart wrote letters endeavoring to explain his conduct, and a correspondence followed between himself and a Committee of Intelligence of the Congress,¹ which was not, however, altogether satisfactory.

While this correspondence was going on intelligence was received that a ship with several tons of powder was expected very shortly to arrive at Savannah. With this powder Governor Wright of Georgia and the Superintendent had obtained leave of the government in England to supply the Indians, not, it was avowed, for the purpose of instigating them against the colonists, but as a means of keeping the savages attached to the British government. The Carolinians, on the other hand, were anxious to get this powder, not only because of its value, but because the want of it would greatly lessen Mr. Stuart's influence with the Indians and lessen the danger from the Indians themselves. It was at once determined, therefore, to intercept the supply. The Secret Committee engaged Captains John Barnwell and John Joyner to undertake the business.²

Upon the receipt of their commissions these two gentlemen immediately embarked forty men, well armed, in two large barges, and proceeding toward the mouth of the

¹ This committee consisted of William Henry Drayton, James Parsons, John Lewis Gervais, Arthur Middleton, William Tennent, and Thomas Heyward, Jr.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 268, 269.

Savannah River took position on Bloody Point in South Carolina, in full view of Tybee Lighthouse and of the approach from sea to the Savannah bar. As it turned out, Captains Barnwell and Joyner had taken post with their men earlier than was necessary for the purpose of their enterprise, but the presence of an armed force there had a salutary effect upon affairs in Georgia, as it encouraged the friends of the American cause in that province. Under this influence an association was formed and a congress held at Savannah on the 4th of July. Collections were made for the support of the people of Boston, and it was declared that Georgia should not be an asylum of persons who from their conduct should be considered inimical to the cause of America. The Georgians also afforded every kind of assistance and support to Captains Barnwell and Joyner, and offered to join them immediately in taking a British armed schooner then in the river, supposed to be waiting the arrival of the vessel from England with gunpowder. On other points the authorities in Carolina took time to consider, but Mr. Drayton and Mr. Middleton, impatient of delay, of their own authority sent them encouragement to fit out a schooner to be used as circumstances might require. Captain Joyner had, however, himself engaged a schooner, and arrangements were made for a juncture of the Carolinians and Georgians. The schooner was commissioned by the Georgia Congress. The British armed schooner was lying outside the Savannah bar looking for the vessel with the powder, but no sooner did she find the colonial schooner coming down upon her than she weighed anchor, and went to sea with the utmost precipitation. She had scarcely done so when a vessel supposed to be that expected with gunpowder appeared in sight. The vessel proved to be a ship commanded by Captain Maitland,

probably the same who had commanded the *Little Carpenter*, one of the regular packets between Charlestown and London, and who the year before had been interdicted by the General Committee from trading to the port of Charlestown because of some chests of tea he had brought for the East India Company. No sooner was the colonial schooner recognized than, guessing her design, the ship tacked and stood out to sea. The schooner, however, pursued and brought her to, and with the assistance of the Carolina party and their barges, boarded her and secured their prize. The powder found on this vessel turned out, however, not to be that for which Governor Wright had applied, but a consignment to private parties, merchants of Charlestown and of St. Augustine, as well as of Savannah, upon which the Carolinians took what was intended for their merchants and for those of St. Augustine, and the Georgians took what belonged to their people. In this distribution the Carolinians obtained about seven thousand pounds and the Georgians about nine thousand.

The letter of the delegates in Congress to the Secret Committee had not been divulged even to the Council of Safety ; but having, through the individual responsibility of William Henry Drayton and Arthur Middleton, succeeded in securing this powder, the Secret Committee now communicated the whole of their intelligence to that body. It was proposed then to write to the Provincial Congress of Georgia to assist in the loan to Massachusetts, but it was deemed better to send a deputation for the purpose, and William Henry Drayton and Miles Brewton were accordingly sent. These gentlemen succeeded in procuring a loan of 5000 lbs. of the 12,700 lbs. which the Georgians had on hand. On the 21st of July the express boat which had come from Philadelphia was dis-

patched by the Secret Committee of South Carolina with the five thousand pounds of powder to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, and passing through the bar of North Edisto she began her voyage for that destination. She happily arrived at Philadelphia, and it was by the arrival of this vessel that the powder was supplied which enabled the American arms to be carried into Canada, and that the siege of Boston was continued.¹

Another venture was equally successful. Learning that there was a considerable quantity of powder at the island of New Providence, the Council of Safety determined to seize it. The sloop *Commerce* was taken into service and armed for the occasion, and on the 24th of July, 1775, Clement Lemprière was commissioned and put in command; on the 25th he received his instructions, on the 26th sailed over the bar with a crew of volunteers, and on the 28th arrived at Beaufort, where he landed his stores and proceeded to clean his vessel. While thus engaged he received direction from the Council of Safety to proceed with all dispatch toward St. Augustine, and cruise off its bar, as a vessel was daily expected there with a large quantity of powder. Captain Lemprière at once obeyed his orders, and on the 7th of August he made Matanzas, where he anchored. On the next morning he ran down toward the bar of St. Augustine, where he saw a vessel at anchor which proved to be the brigantine *Betsey* from London, the very vessel for which his cruise was directed. He at once boarded her and found much powder and a quantity of military stores. One hundred and eleven barrels, one-half barrel, and thirty-seven small kegs of powder were immediately transferred from the *Betsey* to the *Commerce*. This was effected by Captain Lemprière, though the brigantine was armed with two

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 271, 273.

pieces of cannon, and had on board twelve soldiers who, with the crew, amounted to twenty-four in all, while his own force was twenty-one whites and five blacks. After spiking the two guns, he reëmbarked his men and made sail with his prize.

There was an alarm now in Charlestown that an armed vessel was in pursuit of the *Commerce*, and several companies of Colonel Stephen Bull's militia regiment were marched into Beaufort to protect the powder; a detachment of artillery and Captain William Cattel's company of regulars were also sent for the same purpose. A small part of the powder was left at Beaufort, where the *Commerce* had arrived safely, and the remainder, amounting to ninety-one barrels, was put on board another vessel and brought to Charlestown. The powder taken by Captain Lemprière was about 11,900 pounds, which with the 7000 pounds taken from Captain Maitland, and 3074 taken from the King's magazine in Charlestown and its vicinity, amounted in the whole to 21,974 pounds with which the colony was at this time supplied.¹

Henry Middleton, John Rutledge, Christopher Gadsden, Thomas Lynch, and Edward Rutledge were now in attendance upon the Continental Congress at Philadelphia; William Moultrie and others in whom the public confidence was placed had entered the military service, and so were withdrawn from the direction of affairs in the province. Of the old leaders, Henry Laurens, Rawlins Lowndes, and Charles Pinckney only were now in the councils which were in charge of local affairs, and the leadership in these was in the hands of two younger men, — William Henry Drayton and Arthur Middleton. Henry Laurens was President of the Provincial Congress and of

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 304, 307; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 86.

the Council of Safety ; but these two were on every committee, and were dominant in all councils, in which it will be seen that there was much division of opinion.

Among the measures of the Provincial Congress, as we remember, was one by which non-subscribers to the Association were made amenable to the General Committee, and by them punishable *according to sound policy*, under which ambiguous and general terms the most indefinite and illimitable powers were assumed to have been granted. Such powers could safely be intrusted to no man, nor set of men ; and this committee soon took occasion to exercise theirs in a cruel and despotic manner.

There were very few Roman Catholics in South Carolina at this time, and these had no clergy ;¹ but notwithstanding the fewness of their numbers, they were enough in the heated imagination of the Revolutionists to afford something of a Guy Fawkes conspiracy against their government. One Michael Hubart informed the General Committee that upon the 2d of June, he being in the house of Thomas Nicoll in King Street, a certain James Dealy came in and told that there was good news come to town. Being asked what it was, he answered that a number of arms were sent over to be distributed amongst the negroes, Roman Catholics, and Indians. Upon which he had replied, he thought it was very bad news that Roman Catholics and savages should be permitted to join and massacre Christians. Whereupon Dealy struck his breast and swore "he was a Roman Catholic, and had arms and would use them as he pleased" ; that he, Hubart, had gone home, where shortly after in came Dealy and a certain Laughlin Martin and one Reed, who cursed and abused him, and with a drawn cutlass in his hand threatened to

¹ Ramsay's *Hist. of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 37 ; *Year Book*, city of Charleston, 1883 (Courtenay), 389.

cut off his head. That Martin then declared he was a Roman Catholic, and vowed to God to cut off the head of any person who said he should not carry arms. After which Martin called for some drink, and drank of it with Dealy and Reed, and one of his toasts was "*Damnation to the Committee and their proceedings.*" Hubart thus concludes the petition he presented : —

"Your petitioner has prosecuted them as law directs. But as the times appears to be very troublesome, and numbers of enemies both to the Protestant interest and the present cause are lurking amongst us, your petitioner hopes that you will inquire into such parts of the transaction as concerns the public, and your petitioner will ever pray."

This absurd and ridiculous paper was referred to the Secret Committee, and on its back in a disguised hand, supposed to be that of William Henry Drayton, was written, "*Secret — tar and feather him,*" and also in a disguised hand, supposed to be that of Edward Weyman, was endorsed, "*Passed the Secret Committee and ordered to be put into execution.*" The order was promptly complied with; both the men, Martin and Dealy, were stripped of their clothes, tarred, feathered, and carted through the streets of the town. They were then sent on board a ship ready to sail to England, but Laughlin Martin was allowed to land again, and was discharged on expressing his contrition in a public manner; but James Dealy, for an example, was shipped away.¹

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 272, 275, 300, 302. South Carolina was not alone in the glory or disgrace of this tarring and feathering. It was begun, it appears, in Boston by the British troops and a mob of Royalists in March, 1775. A flagrant case of it occurred in Dutchess County, New York, where a judge of the Court of Common Pleas was tarred and feathered for acting in contempt of the resolves of the County Committee. Another took place at Quibbletown, New Jersey, where we are told the matter "was conducted with that regularity and decorum that ought to be observed in all public punishments." See

Mr. Drayton, the author of the *Memoirs*,¹ repudiates the usual apology for these measures in that they were supposed to have proceeded from the intemperate zeal of the populace, and willingly assumes for the Secret Committee the responsibility for them. There can be little doubt, he says, that this first commencement of so ludicrous and disgraceful a punishment owed its origin in South Carolina to this very case; and that it was sanctioned by the Secret Committee is equally clear, as the case is specially noted in the manuscript of William Henry Drayton his father, who was chairman of that committee.² Writing from his father's minutes in the period immediately following the Revolution, when everything connected with its history was still applauded and deemed glorious with but little consideration as to its intrinsic merits, he naturally sees everything commendable in the action of its leaders. But he forgets that this self-appointed power—for the members of the committee were themselves the leaders of the Congress under the authority of which they acted—represented, in fact, but a small part of the whole people of the province; that the movement which they were leading had little or no support in the interior; that the people of the low country were themselves divided in regard to it; and that even among their own associates, and kith and kin, there were many, very many, of the noblest and best who were as much opposed to their authority as the poor creatures upon whom the committee was exhibiting its power and weak-

Moore's *Diary*, vol. I, 44, 56, 57, 138, 178. In the recent historical novel *Janice Meredith*, the author, Mr. Paul Leicester Ford, treats tarring and feathering as an ordinary incident of the revolutionary times. See pp. 115, 282, 284.

¹ Governor John Drayton, son of William Henry Drayton.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 274.

ing its vengeance; that not a few of those who were now submitting to their rule were to abandon or repudiate the cause before the end was reached — the cause to which William Henry Drayton himself was but a recent convert. How could the Congress complain of the despotism of the King and Parliament when they themselves were seizing upon the first moment of power to inflict without trial or law the most degrading punishment? How could they expect their fellow-citizens to join them in resisting the right of the Royal government to take persons to England for trial in certain cases, when the first exercise of their power in the name of Liberty was ignominiously to punish without trial of any kind? Was the venerable Lieutenant Governor, who had so patiently borne with Mr. Drayton himself, to be liable to the same indignity if he did not submit to the absolute authority of these — to him — usurpers of government? Was William Wragg to be tarred and feathered because he had resolutely stood by the King to whom he believed his allegiance absolutely due? because he could not desert his royal master as Mr. Drayton had done? because he had not changed his side as Mr. Drayton had? No! Bull and Wragg were not to be tarred and feathered as Martin and Dealy had been, and as others like them were to be. Their position was too high for that. But these gentlemen of the Council of Safety and Secret Committee — their own personal friends and kinsmen, among them Mr. Drayton, who had gone into the battle for the King with them — were to order Mr. Wragg out of the province, and to see him on the ship from which he was never to land, but from the wreck of which his dead body was to be washed on a foreign shore. Had Mr. Drayton forgotten how earnestly he had pleaded for liberty of conscience when he was on the other side of the question? How indignant he was

when the Non-importation Association in 1769 had published his name as one who had refused to sign the agreement?¹

The General Committee now took up the matter of the Association under the resolution of the Provincial Congress, directing them to summon all persons who refused to sign to appear before them; and upon their refusal to associate or to give satisfactory reasons for their refusal, authorizing the committee to make such order "*as they should think consistent with sound policy.*" In this ambiguous phrase was intended to be couched a power to the committee to which the Provincial Congress would not commit itself by a more explicit declaration. The moderate party, says Drayton, were satisfied with the wording of the resolution, because they would give an opening for extending mild conduct to non-subscribers; while the others were better pleased because under due construction whatever they might do in pursuance of the resolution would be sanctioned under the meaning of *sound policy*.²

In pursuance of this resolution the General Committee summoned the non-associators in Charlestown to appear before them on the 22d of July, offering each of them the Association for signature and demanding in every case reasons for refusing. Twenty-two who appeared refused to sign, and assigned their reasons. These were almost all officers of the Crown, whose official positions were sufficient answers. But among them was William Wragg, who had so stoutly and consistently maintained his loyalty to the King from the very commencement of these troubles, when he had moved to substitute the name of his Majesty George III in the resolution ordering a

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 656.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 313.

statue of William Pitt. He was now equally fearless in his answer to the committee. He refused to sign the Association, he said, because of "his gratitude for the honorable notice his Majesty had been pleased to take of him in appointing him by his royal mandamus Chief Justice of the province, which, although he had declined, he did not consider himself the less under obligations for. And in addition thereto," he firmly added, because "he had a right to exercise his own judgment in the premises, although in doing so his sentiments might differ from the general voice."

On the 27th of July the General Committee began to consider the reasons of the non-associators. They commenced with Mr. Wragg, whose position and standing in the colony, the high estimation in which he was held for his social virtues, and whose large and independent fortune rendered his case the most important. They determined that his reasons were not satisfactory. But now what was to be done with him "*consistent with sound policy*"? This question was postponed to the next day, when a long and violent debate took place upon the subject; but all that could be obtained by the moderate party was that Mr. Wragg should be required to take an oath that during this present unhappy dispute between Great Britain and America he would not directly or indirectly attempt to counteract or oppose the proceedings of the people. Mr. Wragg, however, had weighed the cost in his own mind, and determined to maintain his position; he refused to take the oath, and the committee declared him inimical to the liberties of the colonies, and ordered him into confinement at his barony on the Ashley River. He was afterward compelled to leave the province; and embarking on board a vessel bound to Amsterdam, when near that port the ship was driven on the shore, and in endeav-

oring to save the life of an infant son who accompanied him he lost his own. A tablet in Westminster Abbey commemorates the loyalty and heroism of this good man, who gave up family, country, and fortune rather than swerve from his convictions of duty, though those convictions were opposed to the sentiments of his nearest and dearest friends and kindred. When South Carolina is counting up her heroes of this momentous time, let her not forget William Wragg, who dared to differ with his people and to sacrifice everything for the truest of all liberty — the liberty of his own conscience.

Other persons of respectability and fortune followed Mr. Wragg's example, refused to take the oath, and left the province, leaving their fortunes to the hazards of a civil war, and their claims for indemnity to the liberality of a sovereign whose allegiance they preferred. As no better terms could be procured for so prominent a gentleman as Mr. Wragg, all hopes in favor of other non-associators failed; and on the 31st of July all of those who refused to take the oath of neutrality were declared inimical to the liberties of the colony. The extreme party, flushed with success and with whetted appetite for the exercise of power, now proposed to take possession of the estates of those who had refused to associate and had left the colony, and to prohibit all intercourse and dealing with those who had refused to subscribe the Association; but the moderates rallied against the further stretch of this power, and after failing to postpone the question finally defeated the proposition. The non-associators, however, were ordered to surrender their arms and were confined to the limits of Charlestown.

But what was to be done with Lieutenant Governor Bull? Mr. Wragg was admired and revered, but Governor Bull was loved as well, and it would have been a

dangerous attempt on the part of the committee to have tried conclusions with him. He was quietly resting at Ashley Hall, and had best not be disturbed. Some of the members of the committee, however, were sent to him with a tender of the Association. But the Governor told them "that he wished as well to the country as any one, and both his heart and hand were with it." But circumstanced as he had been and still was, "even you gentlemen," said he, "would look upon me in an odd light were I to subscribe an instrument of this kind." The committee wisely forbore to press him further upon the subject.

The Council of Safety itself was by no means harmonious. It was sharply divided into two parties,—the extreme and the moderate party. In these differences Henry Laurens, the President, does not appear to have taken a decided part. Indeed, he declares in the petition which he addressed to the House of Commons in England, when a prisoner in the Tower, that in no instance had he ever excited on either side the dissensions which had grown up between Great Britain and the colonies—that he had labored for peace. The principal business at this time was carried on by William Henry Drayton, Arthur Middleton, Colonel Charles Pinckney, and Thomas Ferguson, who promoted every vigorous plan, while Rawlins Lowndes, James Parsons, Miles Brewton, Thomas Heyward, Jr., and Thomas Bee were generally for moderate measures, and John Huger, Benjamin Elliott, and William Williamson took part with one or the other party as in their judgment was best. William Henry Drayton and Arthur Middleton were the leaders in all extreme measures, and Rawlins Lowndes was their chief opponent. The subject upon which the difference in the sentiments and purposes of the members of the committee discovered itself

was that of placing Charlestown and the harbor in a condition of defence. Arthur Middleton was always urging the matter in the Council. Drayton and himself were now for the war they deemed inevitable, and from which they did not shrink. Rawlins Lowndes, Brewton, Heyward, and Bee would not allow themselves to believe it possible that they should be engaged in a war with the mother country to which they were so much attached. Arthur Middleton was particularly impatient with Rawlins Lowndes, whom he regarded as the principal obstacle in the way of vigorous measures.¹ He was for attaching the estates of those who left the colony; but in the absence of Drayton he could not get even a second to this proposition. "The matter," however, he writes to Drayton, then on a mission in the upper country, "is not *rejected*, only POSTPONED. *Rawlinus Postponator* declares the Resolution not proper to proceed from the committee of South Carolina, and so arbitrary that nothing but the Divan of Constantinople could think of promulgating such a law."² Again he wrote to Drayton, telling of the flight of Dr. Milligan, "Probably he had an unconquerable dislike to the mode of clothing lately adopted in these scarce times, and by no means wishes to be exalted³ in this damned hot country, but would rather have a high place in Scotland." The extremists were uneasy about Colonel Charles Pinckney, who had been acting with them.⁴ Mr. Timothy, the Clerk of the Council of Safety and publisher of the *Gazette*, writes, however, on the 22d of August to Mr. Drayton encouragingly, "Pinckney does

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 318.

² *Ibid.*, vol. II, 18.

³ The term "exalted" was at this time used for hanging or exposing a person tarred and feathered in a court.

⁴ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 22.

not retreat—he comes forward bravely,” but he adds, “I wish you and Mr. Tennent were alongside of him at this table.” Then he goes on to give an account of the political condition upon the approach of another election for a Provincial Congress:—

“This week will be spent in matters relative to our election. The merchants (say gentlemen concerned in trade) at a meeting to-day either have or will nominate ten of their body to represent them in the ensuing Congress. At a previous meeting they proposed fifteen for their quota—then twelve—and at last condescended to be content with ten. The Germans have taken the alarm and had a meeting. And the mechanics are not thoroughly pleased; they also will have a meeting this week. In regard to war and peace—I can only tell you the plebeians are still for war; but the noblesse perfectly pacific.”¹

Was Mr. Drayton pleased when he received this letter to know that the plebeians were with him? or did he recollect his letter of the 16th of September, 1761, when he had upbraided Mr. Gadsden for counselling with illiterate and common men?²

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 24, 25.

² *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 654.



CHAPTER II

1775

It will be recollected that the early German settlers had pushed into the interior and occupied the territory formed into the townships of Orangeburgh and Saxe-Gotha, and then extending farther and following the Congaree had crossed into the fork of the Broad and Saluda rivers ; and that these first settlers had been considerably augmented by another German emigration in 1764, which last had been greatly assisted by the English government and public-spirited citizens in London. In July, 1775, it was ascertained that these people were not at all inclined to join this movement on the coast against the government of Great Britain.

Their opposition was both negative and positive. They had no appreciation whatsoever of the mere theoretical questions of abstract right in the matter of taxation and representation. They knew little and cared less about the old struggles in England over the church, and taxation, and ship money. The government they were living under was a good enough government for them. It gave them far greater freedom than they had been accustomed to. They had not needed any stamps — if for no other reason — because the government on the coast had not been able to give them courts in which the stamps were to be used ; they were not engaged in commerce, so the stamps had not worried them in that way. Then as to the tea : they did not use it, and did not see why they should go to war about a

matter which did not practically concern them. And with what grace, they asked, could the people on the coast appeal to them to join in a war against taxation without representation in the Parliament in England, when, though they had asked and petitioned for it, they were without representation in the Commons House of Assembly here in Carolina? Had they not been asking for the extension of the parishes in their section of the province so that they might have representation in the Colonial Assembly which taxed them in a way which they felt directly: and had they obtained it? Had they not been called rioters, and had not the Charlestown militia turned out ready to march against them because they had proposed to come down to the parishes and vote, as the government would not give them parishes of their own? Then, on the other hand, had not the English government helped them to come to this country and even given a bounty to those who had last come? And did they not hold their lands by grants of George the Third? and was he not Elector of Hanover as well as King of England, and thus to many of them doubly their sovereign?

To conciliate these people it was thought expedient to send some of their own countrymen from Charlestown to reason with them. George Wagner and Felix Long undertook the mission, but accomplished nothing.

It was now ascertained that the disaffection extended much farther back into the interior and was particularly strong in the fork of the Saluda and Broad rivers, where the German element coming up from the coast had met the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians coming down by way of the foot of the mountains. They too had been without representatives in the Colonial Assembly, and had few in the Provincial Congress which now had assumed to overthrow one government and set up another over them.

They had been too short a time in the province to assimilate with the people on this coast ; and they had particularly felt the weakness of the government here to protect them, or to provide them with courts. They had been compelled to set up a government of Regulators against the thieves and robbers that infested this part of the province. When they had asked for courts the gentlemen on the coasts had told them they would provide them as soon as the King would agree to allow the judges to hold during their good behavior, but not until then. In the meanwhile they had been suffering. It is true the gentlemen on the coast had given up the point at last, but the courts which had been held had been devoted more to political harangues and stirring up opposition to the King than to the punishment of criminals and the administration of justice. They, too, like the Germans, had had no use for either stamps or tea and took little interest in a dispute which from their distance appeared to be only a struggle for political power. Then unfortunately a committee of surveillance in Augusta, Georgia, not to be outdone by their compatriots in Charlestown, had taken to tarring and feathering, and had not only been more unwise in the selection of a victim, but besides treating the victim so ignominiously had punished him most cruelly.

Thomas Browne, a Scotchman, had indulged himself in indiscreet censure of the Revolutionary party. He had done worse—he had ridiculed them. Apprised of the resentment his conduct had excited, he attempted to escape, but, closely pursued, he was brought back to Augusta, and tried before the committee, was sentenced to be tarred, feathered, and carted unless he recanted and took the oath of allegiance to the new government. Browne was a firm man and resisted with a courage which

should have commanded the respect of his persecutors. But the spirit of the mob was aroused, and after undergoing the painful and mortifying penance prescribed by the committee without yielding, says the author of the *Life of Greene*, he was doomed to have his naked feet exposed to a large fire to subdue his stubborn spirit. But in vain, and he was at length turned loose by his tormentors, who were surprised when the simple Indian trader reappeared an armed, vindictive, and implacable enemy. Embittered by his treatment, Browne became a most malignant foe to the cause, and fearfully did he take his revenge. He was now active among these people in rousing them to opposition. Later he entered the royal service and raised and commanded as lieutenant colonel a corps of Royalists called the King's Rangers, and was known during the war as an active and sanguinary partisan officer.¹

Thomas Fletchall, residing in Fair Forest in what is now Union County, was colonel of the regiment of militia, which gave him great influence in that part of the country. His conduct of late had been such as to give great uneasiness to the Council of Safety. They determined, therefore, if it were possible, to induce him to join the cause or to make known his sentiments. A letter was

¹ Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 289, 290; Curwin's *Journal and Letters*, 1775-84, 625. The treatment of Browne was disgraceful enough to the Southern Whigs, but in the infliction of this outrage upon him the Georgia mob was but following the example of the Northern Whigs; and the statement in the account of the battle of Eutaw Springs in the *United Service Magazine*, September, 1881, p. 313, by Major-General I. Watts De Peyster, that Browne was not only roughly handled by a Whig mob, "but actually flogged almost to death, as only a Southern mob — so prone to whipping their own negroes — can flog when their passions are aroused," is an exaggeration, and an addition to the story for which there is no authority.

accordingly written to him, to which he replied complaining of the malicious reports in regard to him, which he declared to be false. He had called the regiment together, he said, on the 13th of July, when he had caused the Provincial Association to be read to each company, but that no one of them had signed it. The people had agreed to sign an association of their own and that one had been drawn up which had been very generally signed from the Broad to the Savannah River—that is, through all the country now the counties of Union, Newberry, Laurens, Abbeville, and Edgefield. He expressed his concern that he was looked upon as an enemy to his country, and wished the government might have no greater cause to complain of his conduct than of some who were little suspected. But on the main subject he emphatically declared that he utterly refused to take up arms against his King, until it became his duty to do so.¹

In consequence of the information that Stuart, the Indian agent, was tampering with the Indians, Major Mayson with two troops of Rangers commanded by Captain John Caldwell and our old acquaintance, Mosès Kirkland, who had accepted a commission from the Provincial Congress, had occupied Fort Charlotte on the Savannah River. Leaving Captain Caldwell to garrison the fort with his troops, Major Mayson with Kirkland's troop returned to Ninety-Six Court House, bringing with him a small supply of powder and lead taken from this fort. Colonel Fletchall was at this time holding a general muster of his regiment at Fords on the Enoree River. Kirkland, who thought himself overlooked by the Provincial Congress in their military appointment, and who also had a grudge against Major Mayson, his rival for military rank and influence in that section, knowing that Colonel

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 311, 313.

Fletchall had assembled a number of men, and believing the whole upper country disaffected to the revolutionary cause, resolved to change sides, and sent a message to Colonel Fletchall suggesting to him to take steps to recover the powder and lead which had been taken from the King's fort and was then at Ninety-Six, assuring Fletchall that the force sent to retake the ammunition should not be opposed. Fletchall declined to appear publicly in the affair, but Major Robinson, of Col. Neel's regiment, and Robert and Patrick Cuningham,¹ with two hundred men on horseback, set out for Ninety-Six, and, on arriving there, had little trouble in possessing themselves of the ammunition; Kirkland with his own company thereupon not only deserted Major Mayson, but carried off with them Captain Polk's company of the same regiment. Kirkland now openly joined Fletchall, whose regiment, as it then was, to a man refused to sign the Association, and going to the other extreme generally subscribed one drawn up by Major Robinson in favor of the King. The number of men at Fletchall's muster field amounted,

¹ The family of Cuninghams (or Cuninghames) was from Scotland, where they had taken a determined part during the struggles there for religious freedom. The ancestors of the Cuninghams of South Carolina about the year 1681 came over to America and settled in Virginia. In January, 1709, Robert and Patrick, the two eldest sons of John, who was settled in Augusta, Virginia, removed to Ninety-Six District in South Carolina. Robert settled at Island Ford on the Saluda River, and was one of the first magistrates in that District. Patrick the same year was made a Deputy Surveyor General of South Carolina, under Sir Egerton Leigh, Surveyor General.

The Cuninghams were not altogether opposed to the principles of the Revolution. They did not think that the English government ought to be permitted to impose taxes on the colonies without their concurrence, but they thought that the people would gain but little if they escaped the injustice of the British Parliament only to subject themselves to what they regarded as an odious tyranny of an arbitrary faction at home. Curwin's *Journal and Letters*, 1775-84, 618-623.

it was said, to fifteen hundred at least. The disaffection of the people increased, and from the Broad to the Savannah River they generally came out against the Congress and for the King. The millions of dollars voted by the Provincial Congress was an endless theme of harangue. Congress would ruin them, and the paper money was cried down as of no value. But above all, their spirits were kept up by correspondence which they had opened with Lord William Campbell, who, through Colonel Fletchall, commended the loyalty of Robinson and the Cuninghams. This correspondence with the Royal Governor gave these men great consequence among the disaffected, tied them fast to the Royal interests, and presented an opportunity of advancement to every leader of the party.¹ Indeed, it is probable that had Lord William Campbell at this time boldly gone up among the people of this section, had thrown himself upon Fletchall, collected his men around him, and acted with promptness and efficiency, the whole proceedings of the Provincial Congress would have been overthrown.

The Revolutionary party was, in fact, in a most unhappy condition. The leaders, the Council of Safety, and delegates to the Continental Congress were divided amongst themselves as to the nature of the Revolution in which they were involved, and the extent to which they would carry it. The two influential classes in Charlestown — the merchants and planters — were opposed to the war. Divided thus on the coast, the whole upper country between the Broad and the Savannah was in open opposition to them, while between the Broad and the Catawba the people had taken no part in the movement — indeed, they had not been consulted in regard to it and were silent. There was but one party in South

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 321, 323.

Carolina which was heart and soul in the cause, and that was the old Liberty Tree Party under Christopher Gadsden, now in his absence, while he was attending the Continental Congress, led by William Henry Drayton, his old adversary, and Arthur Middleton. The men who had marched with "Forty-five" lights from the Liberty Tree to Mr. Dillon's tavern in 1768, and toasted the "glorious Ninety-two Ante-Rescindors of Massachusetts Bay"; the men who had made the Assembly send the £1500 sterling to Wilkes; the men who had dominated the town in the time of the non-importation agreement in 1769 through the General Committee, were still pushing on the ball of Revolution; but as Arthur Middleton wrote to Drayton, they were the common people and not the class to which he and Drayton belonged; they were indeed the very men whose interference in public matters Drayton had so vehemently denounced. Had Lord William grasped the situation and appealed openly and boldly to the upper country, there is little reason to doubt but that the merchants in Charlestown and the planters on the coast would have risen with them and have overthrown the Council of Safety and their government. For wiser purposes however, says one, Providence had not so directed his actions, but left him in Charlestown to experience the daily loss of his executive powers and the little consideration in which he was holden as well by the public authorities as by the citizens at large.

Accounts of Lord William's plots and the critical condition of affairs in the up country daily coming to Charlestown, it was proposed in the Council of Safety to send a commission into the interior to reconcile the people there if possible to their measures; but this at first was opposed. On the 23d of July, it was resolved

to send the Honorable William Henry Drayton and the Rev. William Tennent to explain to the people there the cause of the disputes between Great Britain and the American colonies, to endeavor to settle all political differences, and to quiet their minds. They were given authority to call upon the militia for assistance, support, and protection, and with the usual studied ambiguity of the times "to act as you shall deem necessary." Colonel Richard Richardson, Joseph Kershaw, and the Rev. Oliver Hart were desired to accompany them.¹

The commissioners proceeding by the way of Mouck's Corner arrived at the Congaree Store in the Dutch settlement of Saxe-Gotha — now Lexington County — on the 5th of August, in the vicinity of which a part of the Rangers were encamped. As a first step the commissioners dispatched notices to persons of influence among the people in the neighborhood for the purpose of procuring a meeting of the inhabitants. Not one German, however, appeared at the time appointed and only one or two friends of the Association who had endeavored to get up the meeting. The Germans could not appreciate the refinement that in taking up arms they were warring against the Ministry, and not against the King, and they believed that if they did the King would annul the grants of land he had given them ; they were possessed with the idea too that the Rangers were posted among them for the purpose of awing them into submission and forcing them to sign the Association ; and could not by any argument be induced to approach the commissioners. Colonel Thomson, who commanded the Orangeburgh Regiment of Militia in addition to his command of the Rangers, endeavored to assist the commissioners through the German captains, but these flatly disobeyed his orders to muster their

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 324.

men, alleging that extra musters were warranted only by order from the Governor. The services of a Lutheran clergyman were then engaged to gather congregations, but with little success.¹ Then their pecuniary interest was appealed to, and they were informed that no non-subscribers in the settlement would be allowed to purchase or sell at the Congaree Store or in Charlestown. But in vain; these people would have nothing to do with the movement.

Another and greater danger was now exposed. Two companies of the Rangers had already, as we have seen, deserted and gone over to Colonel Fletchall; and now a mutiny broke out in three of the seven remaining companies of the regiment in the very presence of the commissioners. Captain Woodward had incautiously, while enlisting his men, promised provisions above their pay, and not receiving them the men announced their determination to quit the camp in the morning and disband. This matter was, however, quieted; and in order to allay the excitement of the people and to conciliate the Rangers themselves, the camp was broken up and they were allowed to return to their homes for a limited time to vote for congressmen.²

The commissioners now determined to separate, that Mr. Drayton should go up between the Broad and Saluda rivers, while Mr. Tennent should proceed on the east side of the Broad, between that and the Catawba.

Mr. Drayton accompanied by Mr. Kershaw crossed the

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 325-326. Who this clergyman was is not mentioned, but it was probably the Rev. Christian Theus, who officiated in Saxe-Gotha at that time and for many years thereafter. *History of Orangeburg County, S.C., 1704-1782* (Salley), pp. 74, 80-83, 85-87.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 327-330.

Saluda, and entered the Dutch Fork ; but he found the Germans on the north side of the Saluda no better disposed toward the cause than those in Orangeburgh and Saxe-Gotha. He addressed a meeting at McLaurin's Store, but no argument could persuade them ; not one subscriber to the Association was procured. John Adam Summer, who was a man of large influence in this region and who had signed the Association in Charlestown, proved himself a false brother, and with Mr. Neuffer and McLaurin discouraged the movement. Mr. Drayton and Mr. Kershaw came to the conclusion that an attempt at that time to shake their opinions or remove their scruples would be useless against the influences which evidently held them in check ; in a letter to the Council of Safety of the 16th of August Mr. Drayton wrote, " We made the best of our way from this stiff-necked generation."

On the 15th of August Mr. Drayton addressed a large gathering at King's Creek on the lower part of the Enoree River. His address was received with apparent satisfaction, and Mr. Drayton had begun to hope that he would procure an accession to the Association there, when it was announced that Robert Cunningham was at hand. This brought everything to a pause ; the multitude now took up the idea of having the subject argued on both sides, and the commissioner found himself unexpectedly engaged in a public disputation. Cunningham was invited to dine with the commissioners, Mr. Drayton endeavoring to use the social intercourse of the table to influence him ; but in vain. Browne, who had been tarred and feathered, now also appeared upon the scene and read to the assembly Dalrymple's address from the people of England to the people of America, which had been received from Lord Campbell. Mr. Drayton replied to Cunningham and Browne, and thought that he had got the best of the



debate ; but as far as we are informed he had not procured a signature to the Association.

On Thursday the 17th of August, Mr. Drayton and Mr. Kershaw arrived at Colonel Fletchall's residence at Fair Forest, where they found Browne, Cuningham, and Robinson, who had preceded them, arriving the evening before, as had also Mr. Tennent and Colonel Richardson from the Catawba. The heads of parties, as they then stood, for the first time had now all met together. Mr. Tennent, in his letter to the Council of Safety of the 20th of August, says: " We have at length visited the great and mighty nabob, Fletchall. We found him surrounded by his Court, viz.: Cuningham, Browne, and Robinson, who watch all his motions and have him under great command. We found the unchangeable malignity of their minds, and the inexpressible pains they were at to blind the people, and fill them with the bitterness against *the Gentlemen* as they are called. Gen. Gage's pamphlet is raging through the District and greedily read."

Mr. Drayton writes: " I reached Col. Fletchall's last Thursday morning before breakfast, and Mr. Tennent and myself after breakfast engaged him in a private conversation during near three hours. We endeavored to explain everything to him. We pressed them upon him and endeavored to show him that we had confidence in him. We humored him. We laughed with him. Then we recurred to argument, remonstrances, and entreaties to join his country and all America. All that we could get from him was this : '*He would never take up arms against his King or his countrymen and that the proceedings of the Congress at Philadelphia were impolitic, disrespectful, and irritating to the King.*'" ¹ Robinson announced that he had a commission to raise men for the King. His looks, wrote

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 361, 372.

Drayton, are utterly against him ; and there was much venom in Cuningham's countenance, but neither Robinson nor Cuningham said much. Browne was the spokesman, and his bitterness and violence were intolerable. Mr. Drayton complains much of his insolent conduct ; but one can scarcely suppress a smile when he reads in Mr. Drayton's account that Browne went so far in his efforts to provoke him to violence as to tell him he believed that Drayton and his party did not mean well to the King and that their professions were nothing but a cloak. At this provocation, says Drayton, "he almost lost his caution ; but thank God he did not even appear to do so, but in a very firm tone severely checked Browne whom the colonel bid to go to bed." Mr. Drayton might have been very earnest in his indignation that he, who until very recently had been a King's councillor, and held the King's commission as Judge, should be charged with being hostile to his Majesty ; and yet in this very letter, he had just complained of Colonel Fletchall because he declared "he would never take up arms against his King." The nice distinction between the King's ministers and the King which pervaded all the revolutionary documents up to the Declaration of Independence was too nice for the frontiersmen, who could not regard this organization called the "Association," which these gentlemen were going through the country endeavoring to induce men to join, in any other light than hostile to the Royal government. Mr. Drayton wrote that it was his firm belief that Browne, Cuningham, and Robinson would do all in their power to bring things to extremities ; for they believed that they could beat the whole colony ; and that they managed Fletchall as they pleased.

After some further efforts to obtain a hearing, the commissioners turned their backs on Colonel Fletchall and his



party and proceeded to the Savannah River on their way to Ninety-Six Court House, and then passed on to the Hammonds' residence, Snow Hill, nearly opposite to Augusta. The commissioners there addressed a numerous meeting; and Mr. Tennent then went on a progress into the Long Cane Settlement, while Mr. Drayton turned his attention to the people of Augusta and that neighborhood. But he was soon checked in this move.¹

Kirkland, after deserting Major Mayson, had gone to Charlestown to the Governor, and though the commissioners issued orders for his arrest on his return, and advised the Council of Safety of his approach that they might arrest him, he escaped both the Council and commissioners and had now returned with his Excellency's commissions, and offers of encouragement to all the loyalists in the upper part of the colony. By various accounts which Mr. Drayton received on the 29th of August, it was ascertained that Kirkland had actually taken up arms for the purpose of attacking Fort Charlotte and Augusta, and that the King's men, as they were called, were to meet on the 29th at a place about twenty miles above Snow Hill. This put an end to the progress, and Mr. Drayton sent an express to Mr. Tennent causing him to retrace his steps down the Savannah.

In this situation of affairs, Mr. Drayton assumed dictatorial powers. He ordered Major Williamson to march with three hundred men to Harden's Ford on the Savannah River, about thirty miles above Snow Hill; Colonel Thomson with his Rangers, and as near three hundred militia as he could get, to take post at the Ridge; and Colonel Richardson with three hundred men to take post near the mouth of the Enoree. He wrote informing the Council of Safety that if Kirkland's party should take the

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 379.

field he should feel himself authorized to proceed to every extremity to suppress all who opposed the authority of Congress. He then issued a proclamation or "Declaration," as he termed it, warning all persons against Kirkland. This prompt action on the part of Mr. Drayton confounded Kirkland and paralyzed his exertions. He dispatched his brother to Mr. Drayton with offers of surrender on promise of pardon; but Mr. Drayton demanded his surrender at discretion. Kirkland's courage failing him, he lurked about for some days, after which, with two trusty friends, he fled in disguise to Charlestown, from whence he was privately sent on board the sloop of war *Tamar*, by the directions of the Governor.

But, notwithstanding Kirkland's flight, his principal coadjutors, Cuninghame and Browne, proceeded in collecting men and were soon joined by Colonel Fletchall. Mr. Drayton thereupon with one hundred and twenty-four men marched from Ninety-Six Court House, where, being joined by others, he had a force in all of two hundred and twenty-four.

Upon consultation with Major Mayson, Major Williamson, and Captain Hammond, Mr. Drayton determined to march at once upon Colonel Fletchall's force and surprise it on its march. Colonel Fletchall, however, did not appear, and Mr. Drayton being reënforced by a considerable number of Major Williamson's regiment of militia, formed a camp about three-quarters of a mile in advance of Ninety-Six Court House. Fletchall moved his to within four miles of the Saluda River, so that the opposing parties were within ten miles of each other, with that river between them. At this time Fletchall's force amounted to upwards of twelve hundred, while Mr. Drayton's hardly reached a thousand. Mr. Drayton now had resort to another proclamation or declaration which, though not so

effective as that against Kirkland, brought into the camp Colonel Fletchall and others of his leaders, who came, they claimed, with full power to treat and conclude terms of pacification.¹

This embassy on the part of Colonel Fletchall and his followers was most opportune to Mr. Drayton, for great was the consternation on the part of the Council of Safety in Charlestown at the vigorous measures which he had adopted. It is true that upon the alarm from Georgia that Kirkland was going against Augusta the Council had written him on the 11th of August "that on such an occasion *they were perfectly satisfied he would leave nothing undone, that should appear to be necessary.*" And it was partly on this implied authority and partly on his own responsibility that he had collected his force; but now had come a letter of the 31st blowing hot and cold — or, rather, the reverse, cold and hot, clearly indicating the divided councils in the Board and upon what weak authority his own was based. This letter stated "that they viewed with horror the spectacle of a civil war, and were not ashamed to own that they could not hastily determine upon measures which at first sight may promise to avert the calamity, but which for aught they knew, might rush them upon the very danger they would wish to avoid. If," said they, "the removal of twelve active, mischievous men will really quash the growing opposition, that work may easily be accomplished; but may not our enemy prove an hydra, and start twice as many heads to bring on them four thousand adherents with fury to rescue their first leaders or to revenge their cause?" With the weakness of a body composed of men holding widely divergent views, without a master mind among them, the Council shrank alike from withholding the authority they feared

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 380-396.

to give — and from giving it. They went on, therefore, to say that all things being considered, however, —

“From that confidence which they reposed in his wisdom and prudence as well as from their certainty of his zeal for the welfare of the colony — assuring themselves also that he would premeditate every important step and weigh probable consequences — they resolved not only to rest in him, as they thereby did, all the powers and authorities which were contained in their commissions to him and the Rev. Mr. Tennent jointly; but also, to enlarge those powers, by authorizing him to put a stop to the proceedings of such evil-minded persons, be they who they may, as are or shall be known to be active in creating divisions among the people in order to disturb and destroy that harmony and unanimity which is essential to the cause of liberty and America at this critical juncture; and for more effectually enabling him to accomplish that good and desirable end, he was thereby required and empowered to take every decisive step and to use every vigorous measure which he may or shall deem proper to promote the public service. For which that should be his warrant.”

But when the Council heard that Mr. Drayton had taken them at their word and, acting on their warrant, was embodying troops against Kirkland on the 5th of September, and that the crisis had arrived which required energy, they wrote to him “to discharge the militia as soon as he could possibly do it with safety; as such additional expense would be very heavy.”¹

Under these doubtful and contradictory instructions Mr. Drayton's position was embarrassing enough; but to add to the uncertainty of his authority, he had learned from his confidential friend, Mr. Arthur Middleton, the anxiety and divisions in the Council in regard to them. Mr. Middleton kept him informed of the debates which took place at the Board, and wrote that the power granted him on the 31st of August had only been carried in a Council having a bare quorum present, by a vote of but

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 396, 399.

four to three ; that the three in the minority expatiated upon the "danger of creating a civil war — young man — hot — rash — may raise the people and set them to cutting one another's throats — decisive steps and vigorous measures meant too much." Moreover, Mr. Middleton informed Mr. Drayton that two of the affirmatives were on the point of retracting. From this it was clear that Mr. Drayton could rely for support really but upon one other member of the Council besides Mr. Middleton himself. Well, therefore, did Mr. Middleton wish him to act with vigor for the public good ; but for his own sake with caution ; and advise him "to hurry down, as the Council were doing nothing but repairing two or three bastions to amuse the people."

Considering these things, considering that his powers, questionable as they were, had been given by but four out of a body of thirteen, and that by a bare majority of those present — two of whom had repented almost as soon as they had consented — considering that any check to his inferior force, who were strangers alike to him and to each other — a part of whom were but recently disaffected — would be of the most dangerous consequences, and that any evil which might ensue would be attributed, as Mr. Middleton had suggested, to his "youth," "heat," and "rashness," Mr. Drayton hailed with satisfaction, on his own account, the overtures of Colonel Fletchall and his party ; while, on the other hand, he perceived what great advantages there would be gained to the cause if he could obtain such terms of pacification as would create disunion among the chiefs of the opposition. Mr. Drayton, thus released from his embarrassing position, met Colonel Fletchall and the other leaders, and upon a conference they concluded a treaty between the parties, which was signed on the 16th of September, 1775,

by Mr. Drayton of the one part; and by Thomas Fletchall, John Ford, Thomas Green, Evan McLaurin, and Benjamin Wofford of the other, William Thomson, Ely Kershaw, and Francis Salvador witnessing the treaty.

By this treaty, Colonel Fletchall and his party claiming to be deputies on the part of the people living between the Broad and Saluda rivers and other adjacent parts, declared (1) that the declining of the part of the people aforesaid to accede to the Association did not proceed from any ill or even unfriendly principle or design against the principles or designs of the Congress of this colony or authorities derived from that body, but only from a desire to abide in their usual peace and tranquillity; (2) that the said part of the people never did mean to assist or join the British troops, and they declared that they would not give, yield, or afford directly or indirectly any aid or assistance whatsoever to the British troops or hold any communication or correspondence with them; (3) they agreed to deliver up to the authority of the Congress upon requisition any person who should reflect upon, censure, or condemn or oppose the proceedings of the Congress of the colony, to be questioned and tried according to the mode authorized by the Congress. (4) On the other hand the Council of Safety or the General Committee agreed to punish any person who having signed the Association molested any of them who had not.

It was further agreed and declared that all persons not offending against this treaty should be allowed to continue to dwell and remain at home as usual safe in their lives, persons, and properties; but that all such as would not consider themselves bound by the treaty should abide by the consequences.¹

If Colonel Fletchall and the others who joined in this

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 399, 406.

treaty on their side had had any authority to make it, Mr. Drayton would have gained the most material advantages to the party he represented ; but they had no such authority, and the treaty was instantly repudiated by Robert Cunningham and other principal men of that side. They disclaimed the pacification in great wrath, and Cunningham refused to disband his men. Mr. Drayton believed that the treaty would at least cause fresh discussion among their leaders and would also excite doubt and suspicion in the minds of the British authorities both at home and in England as to the sincerity of these backwoodsmen in their loyalty to the King. It is doubtful if it accomplished much in either of these directions ; but it had rescued himself from a most dangerous position and allowed him to retire with honor to the Board in town, whose divided counsels now needed much his strong will and energy to assist Arthur Middleton in the prosecution of vigorous measures there.

CHAPTER III

1775

THE middle of September, 1775, says Mr. Drayton in his memoirs, was an eventful era in the revolutionary history of South Carolina, for on the 15th day of that month the provincial troops by order of the Council of Safety took possession of Fort Johnson commanding the entrance of Charlestown harbor ; the Commons House of Assembly was dissolved by the proclamation of Governor Campbell ; his Excellency, alarmed for his own personal safety, left Charlestown and took refuge on board the sloop of war *Tamar*, then lying in the roads, and on the 16th of the same month the treaty of pacification was interchangeably signed at the camp near Ninety-Six Court House.¹

The last official act of Lieutenant Governor Bull, it may be recollected, was the prorogation of the General Assembly to the 19th of June.² Lord William Campbell, on his arrival on the 18th, not being prepared to communicate with the Assembly so soon after his arrival, and for the convenience of the members, at the instance of Mr. Lowndes, the Speaker, further prorogued it to Monday the 10th of July ; and on this day the General Assembly met, and without the usual formalities the Commons were immediately summoned to attend his Excellency in the Council chamber, where he delivered them his speech. He stated that his Majesty's instructions, his own inclinations, and the critical situation of the province had

¹ *Memoirs of the American Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 3.

² *Hist. of So. Car. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 791.

induced him to meet them in General Assembly, as soon as was consistent with that attention necessary to be paid to their own private affairs at this season. He had flattered himself that, with their assistance and advice, he should have been able to prosecute such schemes and concur in such measures as would have contributed to increase that prosperity to which he saw the colony so rapidly advancing when he was last in the province. Filled with these sentiments and elated by these hopes, it was not easy to conceive his grief and disappointment at finding the province in such a distracted state: the legal administration of justice obstructed — government in a manner annihilated — the most dangerous measures adopted — and acts of the most outrageous and illegal nature publicly committed with impunity. It was not his duty or inclination to enter into a discussion of the disputes that, unhappily, subsisted between Great Britain and her colonies in America; but he thought himself bound to warn the members of the House that if they apprehended that the people of their province now labored under any grievances, the violent measures adopted were not calculated to remove them: but on the contrary could not fail of drawing down inevitable ruin.

“Let me, therefore, gentlemen,” he continued, “most earnestly entreat you as the only legal representatives of the people in this province — the only constitutional guardians of its welfare — and who are so deeply interested in the event of the measures now carrying on — to deliberate, to resolve, with that temper, coolness, and moderation the important instant demands, and to reflect that the happiness or misery of generations yet unborn will depend on your determinations.” He assured them that, if it was in his power to be in any degree instrumental in restoring that harmony, cordiality, confidence, and affec-

tion which should subsist between Great Britain and her colonies, he should esteem those moments the happiest and most fortunate of his life.¹

This address was made to those who now sat before his Excellency as a constitutional House of Commons, but who were the very same men who, calling themselves a Congress, were engaged in the very measures which, as a constitutional House, he was calling upon them to condemn. The chief difference between the two bodies was that Mr. Rawlins Lowndes presided as Speaker in the one, and Mr. Henry Laurens as President in the other. To such a body his Excellency's appeal was made in vain.

On the 12th of July the Commons attended upon his Excellency in the Governor's chamber and Mr. Lowndes, their Speaker, presented to him their reply. They commenced with curtly observing that at "this very alarming and critical" period they were willing to postpone the considerations of their private affairs whenever the public exigencies demanded their attention: fully convinced that the safety of private property entirely depends upon the security of public rights. They sincerely lamented that his Majesty's councils and the conduct of his ministers had incapacitated them from meeting his Excellency with those expressions of joyful congratulation upon his arrival, with which in happier times they had been accustomed to meet his Majesty's representative, but that the calamities of America, the present dangerous and dreadful situation, occupied all their thoughts and banished every idea of joy or pleasure. They did not doubt the fervent zeal of his Excellency's heart for the real interest and happiness of the colony, nor the sincerity of his professions to be instrumental in restoring harmony, confidence, and affection between

¹ MS. Journal of Commons House, 291, 293.

Great Britain and her colonies ; but they were surprised at the severe censures passed on measures which had been adopted by the good people of the colony for the preservation of their liberties.

In times when the spirit of the constitution has full operation and, animating all the members of the State, gives security to liberty, then we claim, said they, to be "the only legal representative of the people in the province — the only constitutional guardian of its welfare"; but in the present unhappy situation of affairs, as their meeting depended upon the pleasure of the Crown, their constituents would not trust to so precarious a contingent, but wisely appointed another representative body for necessary, special, and important purposes.

They wanted words to give an idea of their feelings at his Excellency's expression, "If there be any grievances that we apprehend the people of the province labor under," as if he doubted their existence when the world resounded with them. They would have esteemed it a high obligation if his Excellency had pointed out what steps they had omitted to avert the inevitable ruin of their once flourishing colony. Every pacific measure which human wisdom could devise had been used — the most humble and dutiful petitions to the Throne — petitions to the House of Lords and House of Commons had been repeatedly presented and as often treated not only with slight, but with rigor and resentment.

The Governor replied that he had delayed the meeting of the General Assembly for about three weeks at the suggestion of the Speaker, Mr. Lowndes himself, and of others, with a view to the convenience of the members, and therefore little expected the implied reflection contained in the opening of their address ; that he had already declined entering into any discussion of the present un-

happy disputes and should not undertake the disagreeable task of replying to the particulars of the address. It was his duty to lay before them the fatal consequences of the measures lately adopted, and he had faithfully and conscientiously discharged it; but as these appeared to them in so different a point of view, he could only add his fervent wishes that the great Sovereign of the Universe, to whom the Commons appealed, would, in His goodness, avert those evils with which the country was threatened.

But the House would do no business. It adjourned from day to day until the 20th of July, which having been appointed by the Continental Congress as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer, the Commons went in procession with their silver mace before them to St. Philip's Church, where again a sermon suitable to the occasion was preached by the Rev. Robert Smith—a sermon which was said to have assisted in confirming their patriotism and settling their determination. On the 21st the House requested leave of his Excellency to adjourn until the 1st of November; and awaiting reply the Speaker adjourned it from day to day until the 24th, when the Governor sent an answer. This answer was inadvertently addressed to the Speaker and Gentlemen of the *Lower House* of Assembly. At this the Commons at once flared up, supposing that his Excellency intended thereby to renew the dispute and assert the right of the Council to be called an *Upper House*; upon his attention being called to it, however, he at once withdrew the message and addressed them under the old style of the Commons House of Assembly. He declined, however, to allow their adjournment.

It was during this time that the Provincial Association was being pressed upon the people as we have seen, and that Arthur Middleton was urging upon the General

Committee to attach the estates of those who had left the colony and for the expatriation of all those who should refuse to sign the Association. In pressing these rigorous measures in the Committee, Arthur Middleton was often alone. The two other extremists were away; Christopher Gadsden was in Philadelphia attending the Continental Congress, and William Henry Drayton was on the mission in the back country.

On the 11th of August another case of tarring and feathering took place. In a letter of the 12th of August written by Arthur Middleton to William Henry Drayton in the upper country, he thus tells of the affair.

"A Mr. Walker, Gunner of Fort Johnson, had a new suit of clothes yesterday without the assistance of a single taylor. His crime was nothing less than damning us all. During his circuncartation he was stopped at the doors of the principal Non-Associators and made to drink damnation to them all, not excepting Sir Wm. on the Bay."

Peter Timothy, the secretary of the Council of Safety, also writes to Mr. Drayton: —

"Yesterday evening the Gunner of Fort Johnson (one Walker) had a decent tarring and feathering for some insolent speech he had made; there is hardly a street through which he was not paraded, nor a Tory house where they did not halt: particularly Innes's, Simpson's, Wragg's, Milligan's, Irving's, etc., etc. At Fenwicke Bull's they stopt—called for grog—had it—made Walker drink *damnation to Bull*, threw a bag of feathers into his balcony—desired he would take care of it till his turn came, and that he would charge the grog to the account of Lord North. Finally the wretch was discharged at Milligan's door. The people were in such a humor there were scarce a non-subscriber who did not tremble, and Wells had his shop close shut."¹

Robert Wells was the editor of the *South Carolina and American General Gazette*, the rival of the *South Carolina*

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 17. This Fenwicke Bull was a recent immigrant from England, and not one of either the Bull or Fenwicke families of the province.

Gazette, edited by Mr. Timothy, and was opposed to these extreme measures. Is it any wonder that under the treatment he should oppose the whole movement? Upon the occupation of Charlestown by the English, he continued the publication of his paper under the name of the *Royal Gazette*. This brutal conduct in the name of Liberty was no doubt confirming many a wavering citizen in determined, if for the present silent, opposition to the Revolutionary party. It no doubt added many a name to the addressers of Sir Henry Clinton and to those who preferred British protection to the tender mercies of those who could uphold the outrageous violence and tyranny of a town mob rioting in the name of Freedom.

Lord William Campbell became much alarmed. On the 15th of August, he sent in a message to the Commons House saying that when he declined some time before to comply with their request to adjourn, he saw too plainly the unhappy extremities to which they were hastening, and he had good grounds to apprehend the want of their assistance and advice; but since that time he had the mortification of being a spectator of outrages he had little expected when seen in this place. He complained that the officers of the Crown had been called upon to give reasons for refusing to sign an Association that was contrary to every tie of duty and allegiance, and had had in like arbitrary and illegal manner an oath tendered to them equally incompatible with their conscience and their honor. He then alluded to the barbarous outrage committed in the streets of the town on the Saturday before, on a poor, helpless, wretched individual.

"In a word, gentlemen," he continued, "you well know the powers of the government are wrested out of my hands, I can neither protect nor punish. Therefore with the advice of His Majesty's Council I apply to you, and desire that in this dreadful emergency you will

aid me with all the assistance in your power in enforcing the laws and protecting his Majesty's servants, and all other peaceable and faithful subjects in that quiet possession of their liberty and property which every Englishman boasts it is his birthright to enjoy, or you must candidly acknowledge that all law and government is at an end. Sorry I am to add that some particular insults offered to myself, make it necessary that I should be assured of the safety of my own family, and that its peace is not in danger of being invaded."

There was more reason for his alarm than probably even his Excellency knew, for Drayton, who had now returned from his mission in the interior, was then urging the Council of Safety, "that the Governor should be taken into custody." Humiliating, indeed, was his Lordship's position: appealing for protection to those who were themselves the authors and instigators of the defiance to his authority. The Governor's message was referred to a committee, of which Mr. Brewton, his friend and connection, was chairman. This committee reported a reply which was adopted. It declared that when civil commotions prevail, and a people are threatened both with internal and external dangers, they would be unwise not to entertain a jealousy of intestine foes, and not to take every precaution to guard against their secret machinations. For this purpose the inhabitants of the colony had been impelled to adopt certain measures which, although not warranted by any of the written laws, yet in their apprehension were more justifiable and constitutional than many acts of the British administration. In times like the present, if individuals would wantonly step forth and openly censure and condemn measures universally received and approved, they must abide the consequences. It was not in their power in such cases to prescribe limits to popular fury. Upon inquiry into the circumstances of last Saturday—of which his Excellency so pathetically complained—they had been told

that the populace, enraged by the daring and unprovoked insolence of a person who, though supported by the public and eating the country's bread, openly and ungratefully uttered the most bitter curses and imprecations against the people of the colony and of all America, had seized him, and after a slight corporal punishment, had carted him through the streets.

They confessed this was an outrage; at the same time his Excellency must do them the justice to own that it was not in their power to prevent it; and they appealed to him if the punishment, which they supposed to be more alarming from its novelty than its severity, was equal in any comparative degree to that which his Excellency knew was frequently inflicted by an English mob upon very petty offenders—surrounded by an active magistracy and even in full view of their Majesty's palace.¹ They were sorry that any particular insults should have been offered to his Excellency or that he should have any reason to apprehend that the peace and safety of his family was in danger. They hoped and trusted that his Excellency's wise and prudent conduct would render such apprehensions groundless; and assured him that on their part every endeavor would be used to promote and inculcate a proper veneration and respect for the character of his Majesty's representative.

This was the most satisfactory answer which his Lordship could get from a committee headed by his most intimate friend in the colony—the person in whose house

¹ This allusion is to the pillory, which consisted of a wooden post or frame, fixed on a platform, raised several feet from the ground, behind which the culprit stood, his head and hands thrust through holes in the frame so as to be exposed in front of it. In this position the poor creature was often pelted with rotten eggs and other missiles by the mob, and otherwise maltreated in the presence of the officers of the law.

he was entertained upon his arrival. His position was indeed most unhappy.

This message of the Commons House of Assembly was the last communication which that body had with his Excellency Lord William Campbell. It was, too, the last business transacted by the old Colonial Assembly. The only entries after this are the adjournments from day to day for a month more, when the House was finally dissolved — a dissolution which proved to be not only that of the Commons House of Assembly, but the extinction of the last vestige of the Royal government in the province of South Carolina.

But there was trouble in the councils of the Revolutionists, and renewed evidence of the divisions and disaffections which existed even in Charlestown, the seat of the movement. The authority of the Congress and Council was not universally accepted even there. The Commons might shield and justify the tarring and feathering of the gunner of Fort Johnson because he had wantonly censured and condemned their measures, which they claimed were universally received and approved, but they could not sustain the authority of the Council even with the militia of the town. There was something very like mutiny in this body in their very presence. In consequence of the disturbances in the upper country the Council of Safety had published a Declaration of Alarm and had placed the Charlestown Regiment of Militia — which was commanded by Colonel Charles Pinckney — himself a member of this Council — under regulations for default of duty as prescribed for times of actual invasion “subject and liable to all the pains, penalties, forfeitures and disabilities expressed and set forth in and by any of the militia acts of this colony.”

Upon this twelve companies of volunteers in that regi-

ment, which had enrolled themselves in consequence of the resolution of the Provincial Congress for forming volunteer companies, and which were well clothed and armed and which had diligently attended their military exercises, alarmed at this order subjecting them to actual service and martial law, prepared and presented a remonstrance to the Council of Safety. They stated that upon inquiry they had been informed that this declaration was intended to compel such of the inhabitants of the town as were not enrolled and would do no duty to enlist themselves immediately. That if this was the intent and meaning of the declaration they remonstrated in the strongest manner against it, as an act which, if carried into execution, would subject them to severe and unmerited punishment and oppression ; and like those of the British Parliament respecting the colonies, would involve in one common punishment the innocent with the guilty. They requested that the declaration should be entirely done away with. The Council of Safety replied, endeavoring to satisfy the volunteers as to the reasons for the order ; but their reasons were not accepted ; and the companies addressed another communication to the General Committee, which the committee answered, but without effect. This discontent of the volunteers gave such anxiety that it was not deemed expedient to issue any orders to them lest they might openly mutiny. At the end of a month, however, the company of Light Infantry led the way to reconciliation by offering their services to the Council of Safety, and this was followed by other companies. It is remarkable that while the Germans in the country were almost universally opposed to the Revolution, the only volunteer company which refused to join in this resistance to the Council of Safety was the German Fusiliers, an organization which, serving with distinction in the Revolu-

tionary war, especially at the siege of Savannah — and again in the late war between the States — still exists as one of the military companies of South Carolina.

The conduct of the volunteer companies of Charlestown greatly discouraged the Council and induced some of them to send to the delegates in the Continental Congress a gloomy picture of things indicating their anxiety regarding public affairs. It equally encouraged the Governor.

His Excellency had in the meantime been endeavoring to maintain a correspondence with the disaffected in the back country. The Council of Safety was aware of this ; but his Excellency had been so cautious and careful as to whom he intrusted his confidences and dispatches, as to baffle their efforts to expose him. It will be recollected, however, that when Mr. Drayton had refused to receive Moses Kirkland's offer to surrender himself, Kirkland had escaped in disguise to Charlestown. He arrived there on the night of the 11th of September and was received by the Governor at his residence in Meeting Street. A creek then ran up what is now Water Street and then passed the rear end of the lot of the Governor's residence, from which communication by small boats was easily maintained with the vessels of war in the harbor. By this means his Excellency had Kirkland secretly and safely conveyed on board the sloop of war *Tamar*. But in doing this the Governor had not altogether escaped the vigilance of the General Committee. It was known to them on the 13th, and the committee succeeded in securing the person of one Bailey Chaney, who had come with Kirkland from the country. The capture of this person disclosed the part that the Governor had been playing. He had assured the members of the General Committee that though applications had been made to him from the back country, upon his honor he had discouraged them. That

though the persons who had applied to him had informed him that the party was four thousand strong, he had advised them to be quiet, — to act the part of peaceable good citizens, — and not to raise civil war among themselves. From Chaney the committee now learned that the Governor had been deceiving them and had held a correspondence with his friends in the back country. To secure undoubted intelligence as to his Excellency's movements, Chaney was induced by threats and promises to introduce to the Governor Captain Adam McDonald, an officer of the First Regiment of Infantry, disguised as a back countryman, a companion of Chaney's. The deception succeeded. They went to Lord William's residence at ten o'clock on the night of the 13th of September, when Captain McDonald, passing himself off as a sergeant to Captain Kirkland and offering to carry safely any message or letter to Fletchall, Browne, or Cuninghame, succeeded in securing from Lord William the intelligence that he had a letter from the King informing him of his Majesty's purpose to carry into execution a scheme for the subjection of the colonies from one end of the continent to the other ; that troops would be sent before the fall, and South Carolina would be a seat of war. He promised Chaney to put him on board the man-of-war the next day, but advised McDonald that he could be no safer anywhere than in Charlestown, as the militia were all in an uproar and were ready to turn the committee soldiers out of the barracks.

Upon the report of the result of this ruse there was great indignation, and Arthur Middleton on the General Committee urged that his Excellency should be taken into custody ; but a strong opposition headed by Mr. Lowndes prevented it. During the discussion Captain McDonald with eight leading and influential members

of the General Committee, who were in favor of Mr. Middleton's proposition, were sent to Lord William with certain propositions, and were directed to demand from him the perusal of his correspondence with the back country and of his dispatches from England, and to require that he should deliver up Moses Kirkland. The committee met Lord William going to the riverside, and made the demands in pursuance of their instructions; with which he at once peremptorily refused to comply. Upon this one of the eight members returned to the General Committee and reported what had passed. The consideration of the matter of taking the Governor into custody was then resumed, contrary as it was claimed to a stipulation that no vote should be taken until all the eight had returned. The moderate party defeated the proposition by twenty-three to sixteen; had the other seven been present there would still have been but a tie vote.

Affairs, however, had reached a crisis. As the General Committee had learned from Lord William that British troops were expected soon to arrive, it was deemed high time to take possession of Fort Johnson commanding the approach from Charlestown to the sea, and they recommended the measure to the Council of Safety. The Council immediately issued orders to that effect to Colonel William Moultrie, and on the next day, the 15th of September, a detachment of artillery took posts at the bastions in the town, which were ready to receive them.¹ As soon as the committee had left Lord William Campbell, his Excellency went on board the *Tamar*, where he remained for some hours and then returned to the town. During the night his Secretary, Mr. Innes, with part of the *Tamar's* crew, landed at Fort Johnson and dismantled

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Car.*, vol. I, 44, 45.

the fort by dismounting all the cannon. They left just in time to save themselves from capture by the forces Colonel Moultrie had ordered to take possession of the fort. This body, consisting of Captain Charles Cotesworth Pinckney's, Barnard Elliott's, and Francis Marion's companies of provincial troops under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Motte, embarked about eleven o'clock at Gadsden's wharf at the foot of what is now Calhoun Street, on board the Carolina and Georgia packet for the short voyage across the harbor. Information had been received of the landing of Mr. Innes's party at Fort Johnson, and supposing that the fort had been garrisoned from the *Tamar*, every preparation was made to storm it. The troops were divided into the forlorn hope, scaling, and supporting parties. The packet took, however, an hour to sail from Gadsden's wharf to a quarter of a mile of James Island on which the fort stood. There she cast anchor, as the mud-flat from the shore prevented her getting nearer unless she ran directly to the fort. This the captain would not agree to do, as he feared the ebb tide would drift him under the guns of the fort. The packet had only two small boats, capable of transporting but fifteen men at a time. The result was that the landing was only effected by the men wading through the water up to their waists, and the day of the 15th dawned when only Captains Pinckney's and Elliott's companies had got ashore. It was determined, however, not to wait for Captain Marion's company, but to move at once upon the fort. This was done with eagerness, but when the forlorn hope advanced up the glacis the gates were found open and the cannon dismounted. Of the garrison only the gunner Walker and four men were taken prisoners.

Lord William Campbell now realized that his influence and power were entirely gone, and he hastened to take the

final steps which put a formal end to the Royal government. On the day of the seizure of Fort Johnson by the provincial troops, he issued a proclamation dissolving the Commons House of Assembly of the province; and availing himself of the same means of escape — the creek which ran to the back of the lot to his residence — took refuge on board the *Tamar*, then riding at anchor in Rebellion Road. Following the example of James the Second, who took with him in his flight from his kingdom the great seal of England, Lord William took with him the great seal of the province.

The Governor remaining on the *Tamar*, on the 29th of September the General Committee sent a deputation from their body with an address inviting his return to Charlestown, in which they assured him that, whilst agreeable to his repeated and solemn declarations, his Excellency should take no active part against the good people of the colony in their struggle for the preservation of their civil liberties, they would, to the utmost of their power, secure him that safety and respect for his person and character which the inhabitants of Carolina ever wished to show to the representative of their sovereign. His Excellency replied, indignantly repudiating the intimation that he could at any time have so forgotten his duty to his sovereign as to promise he would take no active part in bringing the subverters of the Constitution and of the real liberties of the people to a sense of their duty. He declared that he would never return to Charlestown till he could support the King's authority and protect his faithful and loyal subjects. This, as we shall see, he attempted, and in doing so lost his life.



CHAPTER IV

1775

ABOUT the time Fort Johnson was seized his Majesty's sloop of war, the *Cherokee*, arrived in the harbor and took position in Rebellion Road, where she joined the *Tamar*. Upon this the Council of Safety reënforced Colonel Motte at Fort Johnson by Captain Thomas Heyward, Jr.'s company of Charlestown Artillery. At dawn of the 17th of September the men-of-war with the packet *Swallow* sailed up and presented themselves within point-blank range of the fort. An engagement was expected, but the vessels made only a demonstration and returned to their former anchorage. Fort Johnson was then further reënforced by the companies of Captains Benjamin Cattell, Adam McDonald, and John Barnwell of the First Regiment, and Captains Peter Horry and Francis Huger of the Second. A flag was made for the fort and hoisted by the direction of the Council of Safety. It was of a blue color with a crescent in the dexter corner. This was the first American flag unfurled in South Carolina, and its display caused much uneasiness to those who were still looking with hope for a reconciliation.¹

Upon the question of further preparation for hostilities there was great difference of opinion as well in the Gen-

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 91; *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 51, 52. This flag was designed by Colonel Moultrie. The crescent was introduced because the soldiers of the First and Second regiments, detachments of which were in the fort, wore a silver crescent on the front of their caps. Their uniform was blue. *Ibid.*, 53.

eral Committee as in the Council of Safety. Having now possession of Fort Johnson, the Council had prohibited intercourse with his Majesty's ships of war in the harbor, and had limited the supplies for the ships from the town to one day's consumption. This led to some tart correspondence between Captain Thornbrough and Mr. Laurens, in which the former expressed his determination "to have the assistance of a pilot and every necessary supply by *force*, if I cannot obtain them in an *amicable* way." In consequence of this threat the General Committee proposed to the Council to take possession of Sullivan's Island, from which position the ships of war could be reached by guns, and thus be compelled to leave the harbor. The suggestion was formally adopted, but no action was taken upon it. Then a vessel was found, the *Prosper*, which it was reported was able to bear twelve-pounders on her deck, and it was proposed to fit her out as a vessel of war against the King's ships, but this proposition was rejected. Then the General Committee obtained from the pilots a report upon the width and depth of the channels of the harbor, and that eleven schooners sunk in the ship channel and twenty in the other would sufficiently obstruct them. But the question at once presented itself, how could they accomplish the obstruction of the channels in the face of the British men-of-war? The first step, therefore, was to get rid of these vessels, and it was proposed that the men-of-war should be "*first secured, destroyed, or removed*"; but upon the question being put in the General Committee, it was first lost by a vote of 23 to 17; upon a reconsideration, however, the next day it was carried by a vote of 29 to 21. But when this resolve of the General Committee was laid before the Council of Safety with the request that that body would find the means of carrying it out, a division of opinion was found to exist in that

body as well, and so equal was it that it became necessary that Henry Laurens, the President of the Council, should give the casting vote. He asked for time to consider, and the next day voted in favor of the measure; in the hope, it was said, that the public impulse should not be checked and cooled, while a better measure might be devised.

The Council of Safety thus committed to the vigorous measures of the General Committee, the next step was to carry out the plan of threatening the King's ships in the rear by batteries on Haddrell's Point and Sullivan's Island; but the project created great alarm among the citizens, who already saw the town in flames from the fire of the ships. Mr. Thomas Bee, one of the Council of Safety, assisted in the draft of a petition against the movement, and also against the obstruction of the bar, which was soon signed by three hundred and sixty-eight citizens. The petitioners declared the measures "altogether impracticable, and if persisted in would bring on the inevitable destruction of this now flourishing town." They humbly requested that a stop might be put to them until the sense of all the inhabitants might be known. This petition of the citizens was a great relief to the Council of Safety, divided as it was, having acquiesced in the plan only by the vote of Mr. Laurens, who was but half hearted in its adoption. In turn the Council of Safety referred the petition to the General Committee, in which, after a long debate, it was agreed to by a vote of 22 to 11. Thus ended for the time the attempts to rid the harbor of the British men-of-war.¹

The matter of driving out the King's ships and obstructing the harbor had been abandoned for a while; but the party for vigorous action, led by William Henry Drayton

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 53, 57.

with his irrepressible and indomitable energy, were not discouraged, nor were they at all content to leave the military defence of the province to Colonel Moultrie, who, in the absence of Colonel Gadsden, who was attending the Continental Congress, was in command of the colonial force in the harbor. The wildest schemes were proposed and debated, which Moultrie ridiculed. Various bodies of commissioners, of almost all of which Mr. Drayton was a member, and of which he was usually chairman, were appointed to build batteries, to intrench the town, to obstruct the harbor, etc., duties which properly pertained to the military and not to the civil authorities.¹

The dissatisfaction of the volunteer companies and the general situation of affairs had induced the General Committee on the 30th of September to summon the Provincial Congress to meet on Wednesday, the first day of November. The Congress met accordingly at the State House in Charlestown, and chose William Henry Drayton President. Colonel Laurens was thanked "for his unwearied diligence, application, and merit in the discharge of the duties of that office"; but the election of Mr. Drayton would, nevertheless, appear to have been a victory for the aggressive party. This was not, however, the view which Mr. Drayton himself took of it. He resented his election as an attempt to silence him; he charged that the moderate party had voted him into the chair for that purpose; but instead of weakening the patriots, as the aggressive men styled themselves, it was said to have added to their strength, for the President's harangue with which he closed all debates had, it was observed, more weight than the same words spoken by him simply as Mr. Drayton.²

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 58-59; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 95, 96.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 70.

Colonel Charles Pinckney, Colonel Laurens, Colonel Richardson, Mr. Arthur Middleton, Mr. Ferguson, Colonel Bull, Captain Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Kershaw, and Mr. Cannon were appointed a committee to report upon the state of the colony, and the proper measures which ought to be pursued for putting the same in the best posture of defence. In the composition of this committee there was, for the first time, any considerable representation in the revolutionary government of the people of the province beyond the low country. Colonel Richard Richardson was the Colonel of the militia regiment in Camden District. He was soon to take a most active part against the King's party in the upper country, and to lead an expedition sweeping through the whole of that region. Mr. William Henry Harrington was Captain of a volunteer company from The Cheraws. Mr. Kershaw was a member from St. Mark's Parish. Colonel Stephen Bull, nephew of Lieutenant Governor William Bull, was Colonel of the militia regiment of Prince William's Parish, which then nominally included the whole country along the Savannah River. There was no one from the populous region of Ninety-Six, more especially known as the Up Country. The gentlemen we have named as from beyond the low country were from the middle and not from the upper part of the State.

The Congress had been in session but a few days when stirring events took place in Charlestown harbor, and the first battle of the Revolution in South Carolina was fought. It is a common saying that history is fond of repeating itself. It is most remarkable that the battle which inaugurated the war of the Revolution in 1775, like that which inaugurated the great war between the States in 1861, while lasting two days, ended without a single casualty on either side.

British cruisers had kept the New England coast from Falmouth to New London in a state of continual alarm. On the 30th of September Stonington, Connecticut, had been bombarded for a day, two men had been killed, and houses shattered. On the 1st of October Admiral Wallace had sailed up the bay to Bristol, Rhode Island, and demanded from the inhabitants three hundred sheep. Compliance with the demand being refused, the town was bombarded. The firing upon this town began at about eight o'clock in the evening, while the rain was pouring in torrents. The house of Governor Bradford with others was burned, and the women and children driven into the fields to escape the missiles of the enemy. The bombardment of Falmouth—now Portland, Maine—had taken place on the 7th, but the Congress in Charlestown appear as yet to have heard only of that of Bristol ; but that was sufficient to enable the aggressive party to force the action which had hitherto been defeated. On the 9th of November they carried through the Congress a resolution directing the officer commanding at Fort Johnson “by every military operation to oppose the passage of any British naval armament that might attempt to pass.”¹ It was also ordered that the President should write to Captain Thornbrough, informing him of the passage of this resolution in the Congress, whereupon Mr. Drayton as President issued the following : —

“ *By Order of Congress.*

“ TO EDWARD THORNBROUGH, *Commander of the Tamar Sloop of War.*

“ CHARLESTOWN, November 9, 1775.

“ *Sir:* The late cruel cannonade of Bristol by the British ships of war to enforce an arbitrary demand of sheep — the general depreda-

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. I, 47.

tions on the American coasts by ministerial authority — the late advices from England of large military armaments by land and sea, for the hostile invasion of the colonies upon the continent, and proclamation of 23d of August last, at the Court of St. James, by which the good people of America are unjustly described as in avowed rebellion — superadded to the former American grievances, together with Lord William Campbell's threats of hostilities against us — have sunk deep in the minds of the people; who, seeing themselves by the royal act in effect put out of the regal protection, are at length driven to the disagreeable necessity of ordering a military opposition to the arms of the British ministry. But the people of South Carolina, remembering that those who point the British arms at their breast and against their invaluable liberties, are their dear countrymen, and once were friends; unwilling, yet determined vigorously to oppose any approach of threatening danger to their safety, have directed me to intimate to you, sir, as commander-in-chief of the British armament in this station, that orders are issued to the commanding officer at Fort Johnson by every military operation to endeavour to prevent every ministerial armament from passing that post.

“We thus think it proper to warn you from an approach that must be productive of the shedding of blood; which, in other circumstances, we would endeavour to preserve.

“I have the honour to be, sir, your most humble servant,

“WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON, President.”

Captain Thornbrough did not immediately act upon this declaration of war, nor did he accept the challenge to pass the fort. The collision came in another way. A passage to the town without the range of the guns of Fort Johnson was still practicable for the small royal armed vessels *Tamar* and *Cherokee*, — the *Tamar* carrying sixteen six-pounders and the *Cherokee* six cannon. This passage was by means of the channels which separated the marsh land and mud flats, known as Shute's Folly, on which Castle Pinckney now stands, from the marshes and mainland of Christ Church Parish. These channels were known as Marsh Channel and Hog Island Channel. On

the 19th of October William Henry Drayton and Thomas Heyward, Jr., had been appointed by the Council of Safety Commissioners to obstruct them. They now proceeded vigorously to this work, hoping that it would in some way bring about a collision which they desired. To cover the work a coasting schooner which had been armed for the security of the town, and called the *Defence*, commanded by Captain Simon Tufts, was on this occasion armed with two nine-pounders, six six-pounders, and two four-pounders, and Colonel Moultrie was ordered to detail a captain and thirty-five men to act as marines upon her. Captain William Scott volunteered, and was detailed for the purpose. Including the marines the schooner now had a complement of about seventy men. Six old schooners had been purchased for the purpose of being sunk in the channel. Two of these had been sunk in Marsh Channel, and now it was proposed to sink the other four in Hog Island Creek. Things being now in readiness for the business, the four hulks under the direction of Captain Blake, on the 11th of November, covered by schooner *Defence*, dropped down Hog Island Creek with the ebb tide. Mr. Drayton, who was as gallant as vigorous, accompanied the expedition, and we learn from his *Memoirs* that he did so, hoping that something would occur which he might improve in such a manner as to draw on hostilities, and that thereby the Provincial Congress and public councils might be induced to take a bolder stand, and be forced to more vigorous measures. He considered himself justified as President in attending the expedition personally under a resolution of the Congress of the day before, *i.e.* the 10th of November, which had authorized and empowered the President to order such motions of the troops as he should think necessary to enable Captain Blake to sink two schooners in Hog

Island Channel.¹ The affair turned out as Mr. Drayton had desired, for as soon as the hulks which were in advance approached their destination, the *Tamar* opened and fired six shots at them. The shots fell, however, short, and Captain Thornbrough having done, as he thought, as much as his duty required, stopped his fire; but Mr. Drayton had no idea of losing this opportunity. To provoke the British commander to further acts of hostility, as soon as the *Defence* came to an anchor he ordered her two nine-pounders to open upon the *Tamar*, which, being heavier guns, carried their shot much farther than the *Tamar's* had done. The *Tamar*, now roused at the insult, as Mr. Drayton anticipated, returned the fire with three or four shots more, which the *Defence* answered with only one. Captain Blake, in the meanwhile, not to lose the ebb tide, was actively engaged in his work, and succeeded in sinking three of the hulks; but before the fourth could be placed in position the tide turned, and the on-coming flood put an end to the work until the ebb the next morning. \ Meanwhile Captain Thornbrough with the *Tamar* and *Cherokee*, under the auspices of Lord William Campbell, warped into Hog Island cove as close as they could, and about a quarter after four on the morning of the 12th opened their broadsides upon the *Defence*, continuing the cannonade until near seven o'clock, firing during the time about one hundred and thirty shots. The alarm was beaten in Charlestown, the Second Regiment of Infantry at the barracks stood to their arms, and the volunteer companies formed at their different alarm posts, while many citizens resorted to the wharves on East Bay to witness the engagement, or to indulge in the anxious cares which were thereby excited.²

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 71, 72.

² *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, November 14, 1775; *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 71-73.

Notwithstanding this heavy fire Captain Blake carried the fourth hulk to her proper position, and, having scuttled her in various places, she was left sinking. She sank, however, slowly, which gave the enemy an opportunity of availing themselves of the retreat of the *Defence* to send an armed boat which fired the hulk and towed her into shallow water, where she shortly sank. In this action the *Defence* received no other damage than one shot under the counter, one in the broadside, and a third which cut the fore-starboard shroud; neither was any person hurt on board, as the shots ranged between and over the rigging, and passed on to the mainland. During this naval affair the Carolina officers and men behaved with excellent conduct. The garrison at Fort Johnson, warmed by the sight of the engagement in their very presence, attempted to take part, and fired, at ten degrees' elevation, three twenty-six pound shots at his Majesty's ships. One of these fell within a few yards of the *Tamar's* bowsprit, another was said to have passed through her spritsail, and the third to have gone through her mizzen-sail; but the distance was thought too great, and the fire was discontinued. Between seven and eight o'clock in the morning the *Defence* came up to the town and anchored in the stream about opposite to where the Custom House now stands, where Colonel Pinckney and many of the citizens saluted her with cheers; and in a few minutes after Mr. Drayton landed on the wharf, amidst the congratulations of his fellow-citizens, he having been on board the *Defence* during the whole affair.¹

Hostilities, says the author of the *Memoirs of the Revolution*, were now begun. The people were animated. The members of the Provincial Congress who had been spectators of the battle in the harbor were warmed, and

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 73, 74.

they met a few hours after in a fit temper for planning vigorous measures. The day being Sunday, the Congress first assisted in divine service, which was performed before the body by the Rev. Mr. Paul Turquand, one of their members, who, it will be remembered, similarly officiated when the Congress sat on Sunday, the 11th of January before. After the service Captain Tufts made his report of the naval engagement in which he had commanded, and of the behavior of the officers and men who had served under him. The report having been made, Congress voted their thanks to Captain Tufts for his spirited and prudent conduct upon the occasion, and also to Captain William Scott, who acted as a volunteer in the command of the marines on board the schooner *Defence*; and also ordered "that those gentlemen be requested to return the thanks of this Congress to all the officers and men who acted under their respective commands."

The Congress now proceeded to the consideration of other decisive measures. It appointed a committee to consider and report immediately upon the expediency and expense of fitting, arming, and manning the ship *Prosper* for the purpose of taking or sinking the men-of-war in Rebellion Road, and additional batteries were ordered erected. Mr. Edwards, chairman of the committee appointed to report upon the arming of the *Prosper*, reported in the afternoon, whereupon it was resolved that the ship be immediately impressed and taken into service of the colony, and fitted and armed as a frigate of war with the utmost expedition. Colonel Moultrie was ordered to furnish a detachment of fifty men under proper officers to seize and guard the vessel. The President was desired to write to the Council of Safety of Georgia telling of the hostilities which had taken place in the harbor, and soliciting their utmost immediate aid and assistance by a sup-

ply of all the gunpowder and other military stores that could be spared. Mr. Daniel De Saussure and Mr. Robert William Powell¹ were sent with the President's letter to Georgia. The day ended with the adoption of a very important measure which was to serve as a precedent throughout the Revolution, and under which John Rutledge so long preserved the government of the State when all other civil authority was overturned and suppressed upon the capitulation of the city in 1780. It was resolved that "Mr. President (William Henry Drayton), Colonel (Charles) Pinckney, and Mr. Thomas Heyward, Jr., be authorized to order and do whatever they shall think necessary for the public safety until the meeting of the Congress to-morrow."

Thus ended, says the author from whom we have just quoted, the 12th day of November, which followed the actual commencement of British hostilities in South Carolina. It was begun with prayers to the Almighty Throne, from the representative of the people, in which they implored Almighty Providence to favor their undertakings and to support their cause. It was proceeded in with a firm reliance upon His assistance, with ardent endeavors on their part to be prepared for the crisis which had arrived, and for events which would naturally follow; and it was closed by placing in the hands of tried citizens

¹ Robert William Powell was a merchant in Charlestown now acting with the Americans, but he appears to have abandoned the cause. Curwen states that in 1783 a claim was brought forward in the House of Commons in England for services of Colonel Powell, he having raised a regiment of Loyalists, and for losses he sustained which were stated to have exceeded £40,000. Tradition states that while Colonel Powell was in Charlestown he was distinguished by his kindness toward his countrywomen of the Carolina party, who applied to him under the many distressing circumstances to which they were but too often exposed in the town. Curwen's *Journal and Letters*, 1775-84, 662, 663.

the dictatorial power of *taking care lest any damage should happen to the Commonwealth*.¹

The Revolutionists now conceived that they had fairly committed the colony to open rebellion, and in order to settle beyond any evasion the avowal of intention to attack the men-of-war in the harbor, Mr. Drayton as President of the Provincial Congress, on the morning of the 13th, laid before that body a draft of a letter he had written to the Council of Safety in Georgia in which he stated "*We are with all possible expedition fitting out a ship with which, aided by the schooner Defence, we mean forthwith to attack the men-of-war.*" But by this time many members of the House had cooled, and the moderate party under the lead of Mr. Lowndes and Mr. Pinckney rallied to check the precipitancy with which it was sought to commit the people to war. They contended that no such resolution had been taken, and that the scheme was rash. A long and warm debate followed, upon which the House barely supported the text of the letter as written. Having carried this avowal of hostilities, the two vessels which had been taken into the service were sent to sea to cruise near the bar, to caution all vessels destined for Charlestown to steer for some other port. It was determined also to raise a regiment of artillery to consist of three companies of one hundred men each. In view of the still impending danger from the men-of-war in the harbor the same gentlemen — the President, Colonel Pinckney, and Mr. Heyward — were before adjournment on this day again invested with dictatorial powers until the Congress should meet the next morning.

Hostilities had been begun, but there was still great opposition among the people and hesitancy and doubt among the leaders. The aggressive party under the lead

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 75-76.

of William Henry Drayton and Arthur Middleton usually carried their measures, but Rawlins Lowndes was still pleading for moderation, and measures were sometimes adopted by a mere majority. The three regiments ordered to be raised had not been completed, and so divided were the members of Congress that on the 14th a motion to instruct the Council of Safety to issue orders to complete the establishment was at first lost, and at last in a modified form only carried by a majority of one, the vote being 48 to 49. Captain Lemprière, who had served in the British navy and who, as we have seen, had captured the powder off the bar of St. Augustine, was appointed to the command of the ship *Prosper*. Owen Roberts was elected Lieutenant Colonel; Barnard Elliott, Major; Barnard Beekman, Charles Drayton, and Sims White, Captains; Paul Townsend, Paymaster; and John Budd, Surgeon of the artillery regiment to be raised. The next day, the 15th, the Treasurers of the province were ordered to lay before the Congress "the present state of the Treasury." There was, as we have seen, but small representation in the Congress from the upper part of the province; but small as it was, it was enough to suggest that the government they were setting up should be removed to the interior. It was proposed "that the future meetings of the Provincial Congress be held at Camden or at some more central place"; but the previous question having been demanded, it passed in the negative. The proceedings of the Congress were still carried on under apprehension and dread of danger from the men-of-war in the harbor; so when the House adjourned this day the committee into whose hands the safety of the people was intrusted was increased by adding to these Colonel Laurens and Colonel Moultrie. On the 16th the Congress elected a new Coun-

cil of Safety; there were but few changes made in the body. John Rutledge, Henry Middleton, Dr. David Oliphant, and Thomas Savage were elected in the places of Miles Brewton, John Huger, and William Williamson. The undefined powers of this body required revision; it began to appear that some more definite form of government was necessary since the flight of Lord William Campbell and the dissolution of the Commons House of Assembly. A committee was appointed to take this subject into consideration, and upon their report the powers of the Council of Safety were enlarged and more clearly defined; but as the government under this new scheme was so soon superseded by the adoption of the Constitution of the 26th of March, 1776, it is scarcely necessary to go into its details. It is sufficient perhaps to say that by the powers conferred on the Council of Safety the Provincial Congress relieved itself of a vast pressure of executive business. As an illustration of the divided state of public opinion and sentiment, it is curious to note the courtesy and sympathy that, amidst all the hostile preparations that Congress was making, were officially extended to Lord William Campbell, who had taken up his residence on board of the *Cherokee* sloop of war. On the 27th it was resolved "that previous to any attack upon the men-of-war in the road, the intended attack upon such ships shall be notified to Lord William Campbell if he shall then be on board." Having sent this polite and considerate message to his Lordship, the Congress declared the province in a state of alarm, ordered the erection of a battery on South Bay in Charlestown, the destruction of the landmarks over Charlestown bar, the establishment of a general rendezvous of the militia at Dorchester, and the erection of lookouts on the sea islands. Under the recommendation of their delegates at Philadelphia they

ordered the arrest of persons whose going at large was thought dangerous to the American cause.

Messrs. De Saussure and Powell, who had returned from their deputation to Georgia, having reported pernicious practices which had come under their observation relative to the exportation of indigo, the Congress prohibited the exportation of any of the produce of the united colonies, and the President was directed to write to Georgia in regard to the exportation of indigo and rice. The thanks of Congress were then made to several persons who had been volunteers in hazardous services for the benefit of the common cause; and the Council of Safety were empowered to bestow honorary or other rewards upon such as they should think entitled to the same. Mr. Timothy, the Clerk of the Congress, was thanked "for his great diligence, unwearied attention, and accuracy in the execution of his office"; and the Hon. William Henry Drayton, President, "for the diligence and propriety with which he has discharged the duties of that important station; that the Hon. Mr. Lowndes do, on part of the Congress, deliver to Mr. President their thanks accordingly." Whether Mr. Lowndes himself thanked the Congress for imposing upon him this duty may well be doubted, for he was the leader of those who were most opposed to the vigorous and, as they considered, the rash and unwarranted measures of which Mr. Drayton was the soul. These elder men indeed stood with bated breath as the younger under William Henry Drayton's and Arthur Middleton's lead were hurrying them into war. Mr. Lowndes, however, accepted the task, and thus briefly addressed Mr. Drayton :—

"Mr. President, the Congress, sensible of your integrity of heart and ability of mind, placed you in the chair for the most important purposes. Your unwearied attendance during this long session and

your conduct have given the most perfect satisfaction. You are, therefore, justly entitled to the thanks of this Congress, who have made me the instrument by which their thanks are presented to you and which in their name I do present."

Mr. Lowndes had certainly not enlarged upon the duty imposed upon him. As the instrument of Congress he had, in obedience to their orders, presented to Mr. Drayton their thanks. This he had done and nothing more. The Congress was then adjourned on the 29th of November to Thursday, the first day of February, 1776.



CHAPTER V

1775

ON the day the Congress met, the 1st of November, it was informed that Captain Robert Cuninghame had been taken into custody and brought to Charlestown. He had been arrested under orders from Major Andrew Williamson upon the affidavit of Captain John Caldwell, charging him with seditious words. Cuninghame having been brought before the Congress did not deny that he had used the words with which he was charged ; he did not believe, he said, that Captain Caldwell had perjured himself ; but though he did not consider himself bound by the treaty at Ninety-Six, he averred "that he had since behaved himself as peaceably as any man, and although he had opinions he had not expressed them but when asked." Upon this frank statement Captain Cuninghame was committed to the jail of Charlestown by a warrant under the hand of William Henry Drayton as President; Thomas Grimball the Sheriff was directed, however, to afford him every reasonable and necessary accommodation at the public charge. But he was enjoined not to suffer him to converse or correspond with any person whomsoever, or to have the use of pen, ink, or papers unless by express leave from the Congress.¹ The arrest of Cuninghame was deeply resented by the people of the Upper Country, and in connection with another matter, which occurred about the same time, occasioned further trouble and a far more serious disaffection of the people in that region. They were

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 60-61.

led to believe that the Revolutionists on the coast were intriguing with the Indians to bring them down upon the frontier settlements because the people there hesitated to join them against the King. A bloodless battle had been fought in Charlestown harbor. The first blood was now to be shed in Ninety-Six District.

Mr. Drayton while on his mission in that part of the country had had a "talk" with the Cherokees, and had promised to send them a supply of powder and lead; and in compliance with this promise the Council of Safety on the 4th of October had dispatched a wagon with one thousand pounds of powder and two thousand pounds of lead as a present to them. It unluckily happened that about this time Robert Cuninghams arrest became known; whereupon Patrick Cuninghams immediately assembled a party of about sixty armed men to rescue his brother. They failed in doing that, but seized the ammunition on its way to the Indians.¹ Upon this Major Andrew Williamson, who then resided in Ninety-Six, embodied his militia for the purpose of recovering the powder and lead. He formed a camp at Long Cane, and sent a letter to Edward Wilkinson and Alexander Cameron, the Indian agents then in the Cherokee Nation, informing them of the seizure, and requesting that the matter should be explained to the Indians so as to prevent them from revenging themselves upon the people of this frontier. On the other hand, the Cuninghams party represented that the ammunition had been sent to the Indians to arm them against the Kings friends, who formed so large a part of that population.² This unfortunate event added greatly and not unnaturally to the opposition to the government of the Congress and was of great influence in assisting the collection of a considerable force in arms between the Broad and Saluda.

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 64. ² *Ibid.*, 65.

What action should be taken in this emergency was the subject of another contention between the two parties in the Congress, Arthur Middleton as usual urging vigorous measures and Rawlins Lowndes opposing them. The parties were so evenly divided that in a hundred votes two decided the question. Fifty-one supported Middleton and forty-nine Lowndes. By this vote, on the 8th of November, it was determined to assemble a force under Colonel Richard Richardson, and to send him to seize Patrick Cuninghame, Henry O'Neal, Hugh Brown, David Reese, Nathaniel Howard, Henry Green, and Jacob Bochman, the leaders of the Royal party. Captain Ezekiel Polk, who had been led to desert the cause by Moses Kirkland in August, had returned and had been taken back into favor, and was again given a company. He now accompanied Colonel Richardson. There was another person in this expedition, whom, before this book closes, we shall find becoming the real leader in the struggle for the American cause, and who, with others whose names were scarcely yet known, was to redeem the State after it had been overrun and lost to those who were now in control of the revolutionary movements. This was Thomas Sumter, and this was the manner in which he was received into the ranks of the Revolutionary party. "We have consulted with Colonel Richardson touching Mr. Sumter's application to the Council," wrote William Henry Drayton and the Rev. Mr. Tennent to the Council of Safety. "The Colonel readily approved not only of the measure, but of the man, notwithstanding Kirkland recommended him as his successor in the company of Rangers which he quitted and attempted to disband. *The Colonel nevertheless from his seeming connection with Kirkland proposes to keep a sharp eye upon Mr. Sumter's conduct.*" Sumter thus entered the service under suspicion and upon probation.

In this expedition he acted as Colonel Richardson's Adjutant General.¹

In the meanwhile the Congress men under Williamson and the King's men under Cuninghame continued embodying their forces. Williamson lay almost a fortnight at Ninety-Six Court House, receiving those who came in and waiting for Colonel Thomson with the Rangers. Captain Richard Pearis, who, then acting with the Revolutionary party, had accompanied Mr. Drayton on his visit to the Indians, disappointed that he had not received the military position he desired, now changed sides and joined the King's party. He charged the Council of Safety with the design of bringing down the Cherokees upon the settlements to cut off all the King's men. He went so far as to make affidavit that the ammunition taken by Patrick Cuninghame was on the way to the Cherokee Nation for that purpose. As it was known that he had brought the Indians who had met Mr. Drayton in September, it was naturally supposed that he was acquainted with the intentions of the Council, and his assertions were readily believed. The King's party was thus speedily swelled in numbers, while Williamson's militia came in but slowly. Williamson, however, could not believe that the Loyalists would dare to attack him, until the 18th of November, when he received certain information that they were in full march upon him and had actually crossed the Saluda River for the purpose. Major Mayson now joined him with a small party of Rangers and proposed to march at once, themselves assume the offensive, and attack their opponents in camp. A council of war was called which, as councils of war usually do, overruled this vigorous plan of operations.

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 65, 69; Gibbes's *Doc. History*, 1764-76, 129.



On the contrary, Williamson with his forces fell back to a position near the Court House, where they fortified themselves as far as they could before the appearance of the opposing forces. They had hardly closed their slight fortification when on Sunday, the 19th of November, Major Robinson and Captain Patrick Cuninghame appeared with their party. A conference was called, and a meeting took place between Major Mayson and Captain Bowie on the one side, and Robinson, Cuninghame, and Evan McLaurin on the other. Robinson and his party demanded that Major Williamson's militia should surrender their arms and disband. While Williamson was considering this demand two of his men were seized by the other party, whereupon he gave orders to rescue them, and thus brought on a conflict, the first bloodshed in the Revolution in South Carolina. For two hours and a half the firing on both sides was incessant. The garrison including officers consisted of 562¹ men, while the number

¹ A return of the militia and volunteers on duty in the fortified camp at Ninety-Six on Sunday, the 19th of November, 1775, under the command of Major Andrew Williamson. By order of the Honorable, the Provincial Congress.

Number of companies.	Commanding officers' names of the several companies.	Number of officers.	Number of sergeants.	Number of privates.	Total.	Total of all ranks in the camp.
1	George Reed	1	2	22	25	
2	Andrew Pickens	2	3	35	40	
3	Aaron Smith	3	2	12	17	
4	Benjamin Tutt	3	2	20	34	
5	Andrew Hamilton	3	2	18	23	
6	Thomas Langden	2	1	9	12	
7	Adam Crane Jones	2	2	22	26	
8	Mathew Beraud	3	0	10	13	
9	Charles Williams	1	2	8	11	

of besiegers was about 1890. The siege lasted two days, during which Major Williamson's men suffered great hardship, though but one man was killed and twelve wounded ; while on the other side several were killed and about twenty wounded. On Tuesday, the 21st, at sunset the King's party displayed a white flag and called a parley, in which Major Robinson renewed his former demand, allowing only one hour for answer. Captain Bowie was sent at once with the joint answer of Majors Williamson and

Number of companies.	Commanding officers' names of the several companies.	Number of officers.	Number of sergeants.	Number of privates.	Total.	Total of all ranks in the camp.
10	Francis Logan	2	1	15	18	
11	Alexander Noble	2	0	2	4	
12	John Anderson	2	1	8	11	
13	James Williams	2	2	24	28	
14	Robert McCreary	3	2	25	30	
15	John Rodgers	3	2	15	20	
16	Jacob Colson *	2	1	15	18	
17	Hugh Middleton	1	0	2	3	
18	Francis Sinquefield	2	0	15	17	
19	James McCall	3	3	48	54	
20	David Hunter	2	2	15	19	
21	John Erwin	3	2	21	26	
22	Robert Anderson	2	1	15	18	
23	Nathaniel Abney	3	2	18	23	
24	William Wilson	2	1	13	16	
25	Joseph Hamilton Artillery	1	0	16	17	
		55	36	432	523	
	Major Williamson				1	
	Major Mayson				1	
	Major Mayson's Rangers				37	502

* Captain Colson's company were volunteers from Georgia.

— *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 150.

Mayson, that they were determined never to resign their arms. In two hours Major Robinson returned with Captain Patrick Cunningham, and upon their withdrawing the peremptory demand for surrender it was agreed that a conference should take place the next morning. Accordingly, at the appointed hour, Majors Williamson and Mayson with Captains Pickens and Bowie met Major Robinson, Captain Cunningham, Evan McLaurin, and Pearis, when it was agreed that hostilities should immediately cease, that the garrison should be marched out of their improvised fort and their swivels given up, which by a secret agreement for that purpose were in a day or two privately restored. This mock surrender of the swivels was agreed upon by the leaders to appease a large party of the besiegers who, while the negotiation was progressing, demanded their surrender. The treaty further stipulated that the public differences should be submitted to Lord William Campbell the Governor on the part of the King's men, and to the Council of Safety on the part of Major Williamson and those under his command; that each party should send messengers to their principals, and twenty days be allowed for their return; that Major Robinson should withdraw his men over the Saluda River, and keep them there or disperse them as he pleased until he should receive his Excellency's orders; that no person of either party should be molested in returning home; that should reënforcements arrive, they should be bound by the treaty; that all prisoners should be set at liberty, the fortifications levelled, and the well which had been dug in the forts filled up.¹

Such was the rather inglorious end of an affair which otherwise, however, might have produced the most disastrous consequences, and at once have inaugurated the

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 116, 120.

fratricidal strife which later drenched this fair land in blood. It was not, however, entirely to the advantage of Major Williamson's party; for the other was composed of much more discordant materials than his own, and could not have been kept inactively together. It was observed that none of those who had signed the treaty of Ninety-Six with Mr. Drayton took any open part in this rising except McLaurin. Colonel Fletchall, it is true, was charged with privately encouraging it. The whole enterprise of this heterogeneous mass calling themselves King's men — some acting upon principle and more perhaps from timidity, believing the story of the Indians in the affidavit of Pearis — was based upon the belief that Major Williamson's party would immediately surrender and submit. Without a leader capable of controlling them by influence or authority, and every officer thinking himself on a footing with Major Robinson, the head of the expedition, the party soon fell to pieces.

In the meanwhile Matthew Floyd, the messenger sent by Major Robinson to Lord William Campbell under the terms of the treaty, arrived in Charlestown and applied to the Council of Safety for permission to repair to his Lordship on board the British man-of-war, declaring that he had lost his dispatches, and therefore it was necessary he should himself give his Excellency accounts of the transaction at Ninety-Six. This story of the loss of his dispatches naturally created suspicion, and the Council of Safety in allowing him to go to his Excellency required that he should be accompanied by one Mr. Merchant on the part of the Council, who was required to be present at any interview and conversation between Lord William and Floyd. But notwithstanding Mr. Merchant's remonstrance, as soon as Floyd was on board Lord William took him down into his cabin, where, with Innes his

secretary, they had a private interview ; and upon its conclusion Innes informed Mr. Merchant that his Lordship desired he would return and inform those who had sent him that Floyd was a messenger from a friend of the government and must be detained until his Lordship had determined on his answer. Upon this the Council, indignant at the conduct of the Governor, issued an order for the arrest of Floyd upon his landing from the man-of-war ; and, accordingly, two days after, upon his attempting secretly to pass through the town at night, he was seized and taken before that body. There he was examined, and it was drawn from him that Lord William had directed him to tell those who sent him "to do everything they could for the best advantage — that he did not desire any effusion of blood, but whatever they should do would meet with his concurrence." A weaker and more mischievous message it is difficult to conceive ; but surely the Council having received the messenger sent by the King's friends under a treaty made by Williamson and Mayson their officers, good faith demanded that he should be allowed to return and deliver his Lordship's message, whether that message was for peace or war. But the Council took a different view and put Floyd in jail.¹

In the meanwhile Colonel Richardson had commenced his march under the orders of the Council and was directing his course toward Colonel Fletchall's command over the Broad River ; but learning of Williamson's investment, he changed his direction and proceeded by forced marches to the Congaree River, which he crossed. By the 3d of November his force had increased to fifteen hundred men, when calling a council of war it was decided that his army was not bound by the treaty of cessation at Ninety-Six, and at once made preparation for crossing the Saluda

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 123, 125.

into the Dutch Fork.¹ This was clearly another violation of the treaty ; for Williamson and Mayson had expressly stipulated that should reënforcements arrive, they should be bound by it. The former leaders of the King's party had stood by the stipulations which they had made with Mr. Drayton. None of them except McLaurin were found in Robinson's command. It is true that Fletchall was suspected of privately encouraging the movement ; but this was mere suspicion, ostensibly at least he was scrupulously observing his engagement. On the other hand, Colonel Richardson, under the government of which Mr. Drayton was the President, disregarding the terms upon which Williamson and Mayson had been released from that siege, marched upon those who, on the faith of the treaty, had disbanded their forces.

On the 2d of December Colonel Richardson pushed forward into the Dutch Fork and encamped near McLaurin's store, fifteen miles from the Saluda. At this camp several of Fletchall's captains were made prisoners, and Colonel Richardson issued a proclamation calling upon the inhabitants to deliver up the bodies of Patrick Cuninghame, Henry O'Neal, and others who had taken the ammunition, and those who had taken part in the siege of Ninety-Six ; and to deliver up the ammunition taken by Cuninghame, and the arms of all the aiders and abettors of these robbers, murderers, and disturbers of the peace. From the benefits of the proclamation all capital offenders were excluded ; for these just punishment was declared to be in store. Here Colonel Richardson was joined by Colonel Thomas with 200 men, Colonel Neel with 200, Colonel Lyles with 150, which together with Colonel Thomson's regiments of Rangers and militia and his own regiment made his force amount in the whole to about 2500 men ;

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 123, 125.

in addition to which Colonel Polk was in full march from North Carolina with 600 men.

As Colonel Richardson's army advanced, the King's party fell back constantly retreating. They were thoroughly disheartened by the failure of the promises of Lord William Campbell and his weak conduct. Occasionally they would make a stand; but as soon as Colonel Richardson advanced, they would retreat. By the 12th of December Colonel Richardson's army, which then consisted of three thousand men, had penetrated far into the interior, and had taken several prisoners "of the first magnitude," as he described them in the letter to the Council of Safety. Among them were Colonel Thomas Fletchall, Captain Richard Pearis, and Captain Shuberg. Fletchall was found hidden in a large sycamore tree with a hollow seven or eight feet wide on Fair Forest Creek, from which he was unkennelled by the Rangers and some volunteers under Colonel Thomson, who had been sent to scour that part of the disaffected district and to beat up Fletchall's quarters.¹

Richardson pressed forward through all the inclemencies of the winter weather, though his men were thinly clothed and indifferently provided. He halted and encamped at Liberty Hill on the line between Newberry and Laurens counties, about four or five miles from the Enoree River. Here he collected his most important prisoners — those reputed to be the most active against the authority of the Provincial Congress, and placing them under the care of his son Captain Richard Richardson, Jr., he sent them under escort to Charlestown. Having thus divested himself of this care, and his force still further increased by

¹ From this time Fletchall disappears from the scene of the Revolution. After the fall of Charlestown he was in commission under the Crown, and in 1782 his estate was confiscated by the "Jacksonborough Legislature." Sabine's *Am. Loyalists*, 288; *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. VI, 1.

Colonels Rutherford and Graham of North Carolina with about five hundred men, and by Major Andrew Williamson and Captain Hammond with a party of Colonel Stephen Bull's regiment amounting to about eight hundred men, his whole force now amounting to between four thousand and five thousand strong, he scoured the whole of the upper country, penetrating four miles beyond the Cherokee boundary line to a place called the Great Cane Brake on Reedy River. At Cane Brake there was a camp of King's men which it was Richardson's object to break up. For this purpose he dispatched Colonel Thomson with about thirteen hundred men, who after a tedious march of near twenty-three miles on the 21st of December arrived within view of the Loyalists' campfires. Toward daylight of the 22d Thomson moved forward to attack, and had nearly surrounded the camp when his men were discovered; and a fight immediately took place. Patrick Cuninghame escaped on a horse bareback, telling every one "to shift for himself." Great slaughter, it is said, would have ensued had not Colonel Thomson prevented it. Five or six of Cuninghame's men were, however, killed, and one hundred and thirty were taken prisoners. Of Colonel Thomson's troops none were killed and only one was wounded.

Colonel Richardson now regarding the object of the campaign as accomplished, dismissed the North Carolina troops and breaking up his camp marched homewards. From the snow which fell in the latter part of the expedition it was called the "Snow Campaign."¹ The campaign was supposed to have completely broken up the King's party in the upper country, but its success to this extent was only apparent.

While Colonel Richardson was thus putting down the

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 126, 132.

opposition in the interior, the ship of war *Scorpion* arrived, having on board Governor Josiah Martin of North Carolina, who, like Lord William Campbell, had fled from his government. There were then two British Governors in Charlestown harbor on board the British fleet, which consisted of three ships of war, — the *Tamar*, the *Cherokee*, and the *Scorpion*.

Lord William Campbell was a weak man, but he was no coward. He had formerly been in the British navy and had commanded a vessel on the coast of Carolina and was familiar with naval affairs. Having now three men-of-war in the harbor, Captain Tolemache of the *Scorpion* and his Lordship proposed an attack upon Fort Johnson, but Captain Thornbrough of the *Tamar* declined to join in it, not believing that his ship could lie before the guns of the fort. Captain Tolemache, disappointed in this project, determined in some other way to distress the people who, he said, were in active rebellion. Accordingly, on the 6th of December, he seized two merchant sloops inward bound and regularly cleared, the one from St. Kitts and the other from Jamaica. On board the sloop from St. Kitts was a sum of money in specie, belonging to Messrs. Samuel and Benjamin Legaré of Charlestown. This money Captain Tolemache turned over to Lord William Campbell. Upon learning of this the gentlemen to whom the money belonged determined upon reprisal, and with a party of the light infantry company of which they were members seized and carried away from Lord William's residence his chariot and horses. Learning of this the Council at once summoned the parties before them, and having heard them repudiated their conduct and ordered the chariot and horses returned to Lady Campbell. They were accordingly sent to her by the messenger of the Council, but that lady indignantly refused to receive

them. Now that Lord William Campbell had deserted his post and abandoned his friends in the province, some of them were inclined to conciliate the powers that he had left in possession of the government. Among others, Fenwicke Bull, into whose balcony the mob that had tarred and feathered the gunner of Fort Johnson had flung a bag of feathers, telling him to keep them until his turn had come, seems to have been of this opinion, and having been sent to make a notarial demand of the captured vessels and the money belonging to the Legarés, on his return reported the conversation which had passed between Lord William, Captain Tolemache, and himself. From this it appeared that Captain Tolemache had, on his arrival, proposed to attack Fort Johnson, and would have done so, he avowed, if it had cost the lives of fifty men, and laid the town in ashes. He expected a reënforcement of two frigates and a bomb vessel, and he declared the town would surely be destroyed. He avowed the seizure of the Legaré money, but said that it had been delivered to Lord William, whose receipt he had for it. Lord William, on the contrary, declared that he had nothing to do with the money or the seizure. Upon this the Council of Safety gave the Legarés permission to sell the chariot and horses to reimburse themselves for their money in Lord William's hands. Lady Campbell withdrew on the 15th of December, and retired to her husband on board the *Cherokee*.¹

Wishing, as it was said, to give some energy to the naval preparations which were going on about this time, and which it required an influential character to promote, the Council, as it did in every instance, turned to Mr. Drayton, and, notwithstanding that he was the President of the Provincial Congress, and as such the chief executive

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 158, 161.

of the province, he was now appointed by that body to be "captain and commander of the *Prosper* for the protection of the harbor of Charlestown." It is true, observes his son, the editor of his *Memoirs*, Mr. Drayton's liberal education in Europe had been very different from one of sea affairs, on which account his appointment was thought somewhat extraordinary; but the Council of Safety had their reason for so doing, and were satisfied they thereby promoted the public service. Moultrie, in his *Memoirs*, ridicules the appointment, and says that while Mr. Drayton was a gentleman of great abilities and warm in the American cause, he was no sailor, and did not know any one rope from another.¹ It is very evident that in the absence of Christopher Gadsden, who was in attendance on the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, Mr. Drayton controlled the Revolutionary party in South Carolina. Besides Christopher Gadsden, the other delegates—Henry Middleton, Thomas Lynch, and the two Rutledges, John and Edward—were in Philadelphia, and without their restraining influence William Henry Drayton and Arthur Middleton were rushing on at a pace with which Henry Laurens could not keep up, nor could Rawlins Lowndes resist, however much he might hesitate to approve.

Having charged Mr. Drayton—Captain Drayton, as he was now styled—with the duty of cutting off communication with the fleet, the Committee of Safety now turned their attention to making the positions of the British men-of-war so uncomfortable as to compel them to move, if not leave the harbor. Two members were appointed to reconsider the subject of erecting a battery on Haddrell's Point, and, of course, we may be sure that William Henry Drayton was one; Dr. David Oliphant was the other. They made a favorable report, as was to

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 111.

have been expected, whereupon the Council of Safety issued orders to Colonel Moultrie to confer with Mr. Drayton and Dr. Oliphant upon the subject.¹ However restive Colonel Moultrie may have been at this supervision and control of civil officers over military matters of which he might naturally consider himself the better judge, he made no question, but entered heartily into the preparations for the movement. Major Charles Cotesworth Pinckney was detailed for the purpose with a detachment of four captains, eight subalterns, and two hundred rank and file, with a number of mechanics and laborers. Colonel Moultrie and many gentlemen volunteers passed over with the party on the night of the 19th of December, and on landing at Haddrell's Point they fell to work with such spirit that by daylight the battery was so far progressed that the party were covered from the shot of the ships, and in a few hours more their guns were mounted and fire opened at about a mile's distance, with a few shots from the eighteen-pounders. The men-of-war immediately moved their stations and fell back opposite Sullivan's Island. Having successfully forced the British ships from their position, and obtained command of the cove so as to secure possession of Sullivan's Island, the next move was to erect a fort there which would compel another move on the part of the fleet. A force of fifty men from each of the two regiments was, on the 10th of January, 1776, thrown upon the island for this purpose, the appearance of which accomplished the purpose. As soon as the captains of the sloop of war discovered that the Carolinians had got possession of the island and were building a battery, they raised anchors and left the port, taking with them the last Royal Governor of South Carolina.

The day after, *i.e.* the 11th, two other British men-of-

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 163-184.



war, the *Syren* of twenty-eight and the *Raven* of eighteen guns, appeared off the bar and sent a barge in to procure intelligence.¹ The boat was fired upon from Fort Johnson. Finding that the fort was in the possession of the provincials, and that the sloops of war had departed, the boat returned to the British ship over the bar, threatening, however, to come back with the first fair wind and tide.

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 164, 165.



CHAPTER VI

1776

THE Provincial Congress which had adjourned on the 29th of November, 1775, now met on the 1st of February, 1776, and soon after Henry Middleton, John Rutledge, and Christopher Gadsden returned from Philadelphia and presented a manuscript copy of the journal of the Continental Congress up to that time.

The colonies had defied and overthrown the Royal and Proprietary governments, but as yet they had set up no formal government in their stead. The Continental Congress had assumed and exercised several powers which were incidental only to sovereignty. It had issued money, issued letters of marque and reprisal, and organized armies, but as yet there was no executive or organized government. Nor was there any more formal government in the several colonies themselves; there was no governor, nor courts, nor judges. Provincial congresses or assemblies governed the various colonies by committees and councils.

The first Congress, or Convention, in South Carolina which had assembled on the 6th of July, 1774, under the Exchange, had been summoned by a number of "principal gentlemen" of Charlestown to whom the Boston circular had been sent, and they in their turn had summoned the "principal gentlemen" in other parts of the province, who were in accord with the movement, and they or their friends had come. The body thus assembled had no constitutional authority whatever, nor was it a truly rep-

representative one. It was not the result of any general election or choice of the people. There had been no preliminary discussion or consideration whether or not they would have such a convention. It was indeed but a voluntary meeting of private citizens. This body had usurped the government and had by its general committee actually governed the colony for six months, notwithstanding that Lieutenant Governor Bull was present nominally doing so. Then the General Committee had ordered an election which had been held under its auspices, and the Congress so chosen had ordered a second election, in August, 1775, which took place so far indeed as it was held at all, amidst the confusion and disturbances of the time; and at that election the members of the present Congress had been chosen. Of the merits of these elections we have spoken in a former volume.¹ The body last elected and now sitting had, by its Council of Safety, general committees, and other committees and commissions, continued the exercise of the functions of government, and had administered the affairs of the province in defiance of the Royal authority. This condition of things Lord William Campbell had himself, to some extent, countenanced; for though after some vacillation he had refused to receive officially the address of the Congress as a body, upon his arrival he had, nevertheless, complied with its recommendations and commissioned officers of the volunteer companies raised by it. On the other hand, the Council of Safety while carrying matters with a very high hand in most things were still chary in the exercise of prerogatives of sovereignty in matters which would

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 755-762, 793. No Ms. journals of either of these bodies can be found. Our information in regard to them is derived from the *Gazette*, occasional printed extracts of journals, and Drayton's *Memoirs*.

remain of record. Especially were they apprehensive that the giving of commissions, stamping and issuing money, and the giving orders to the military might thereafter be regarded as acts of treason, and as some of them often said they felt as if they were transacting business with halters about their necks—straining at this gnat they would not give commissions to the military officers, but certificates only. But now that Lord William Campbell, having first dissolved the General Assembly, had gone, taking with him the great seal of the province, and all the members of the Council having also departed, it became necessary to establish some more formal government.

As early as June 2, 1775, the Provincial Convention of Massachusetts had addressed a letter to the Continental Congress, setting forth the difficulties they had labored under for want of a regular form of government, and asking its advice respecting the taking up and exercising the powers of civil government, and declaring the readiness of their people to submit to such a general plan as the Congress might direct for the colonies or themselves, to establish one for Massachusetts. The subject was one upon which there was great division of opinion, and was approached with dread and apprehension. John Adams declares that it was his opinion that Congress ought at once to recommend to the people of every colony to call such conventions immediately and set up governments of their own, under their own authority, for the people were the source of all authority and original of all power. He says that these were new and terrible doctrines to the most of the members, but that a few heard them with apparent pleasure, and none more than Mr. John Rutledge of South Carolina and Mr. John Sullivan of New Hampshire.

The letter of the Massachusetts Convention was referred

in the Continental Congress to a committee of which John Rutledge was chairman, who, on June 9, reported a resolution which was adopted, declaring that as the Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts would not observe the directions of the ancient charter of that colony, they were to be considered as absent and their offices vacant; and as there was no council there and the inconveniences arising from the suspension of the powers of government were intolerable, especially at a time when General Gage had actually levied war and was carrying on hostilities against his Majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects of that colony:—

“That in order to conform as near as may be to the spirit and substance of the charter it be recommended to the Provincial Convention to write letters to the inhabitants of the several places which are entitled to representation in Assembly, requesting them to choose such representatives and that the Assembly when chosen do elect counsellors, and that such Assembly or Council exercise the power of government until a Governor of his Majesty's appointment will consent to govern the colony according to its charter.”¹

Mr. Adams represents John Rutledge as agreeing with him in his desire to have separate and independent governments set up. This proposed scheme of government it will be observed, however, was but a temporary one. It looked to a future reconciliation, and was to last only until a governor of his Majesty's appointment would consent to govern the colony according to the charter of the colony.

The subject was again renewed in the Continental Congress in October upon the presentation by the delegates from New Hampshire of their instructions to obtain the

¹ Printed *Extracts from Journal of Provincial Congress of So. Ca.; The Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. III, 13, 17; *Marshall's Life of Washington*, vol. II, 220, 221.

advice and direction of the Congress with respect to a method of administering justice and regulating civil affairs, when John Rutledge, who, Mr. Adams says, was then completely with him in his desire to revolutionize all the governments, brought forward immediately some representations from his own State, and submitted several papers relating to the subject. These were referred to a committee of which Mr. Harrison of Virginia was chairman, and upon their report on the 4th of November it was —

“Resolved, that if the convention of South Carolina shall find it necessary to establish a form of government in that colony, it be recommended to that convention to call a full and free representation of the people, and that this said representation, if they think it necessary, shall establish such a form of government as in their judgment will produce the happiness of the people and most effectually secure peace and good order in the colony during the continuance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies.”¹

Mr. Adams represents that this resolution was carried through by Mr. John Rutledge and himself, that while it was under consideration he labored to expunge the words “colony” and “colonies,” and insert the words “State” and “States,” and to have the word “dispute” to make way for that of “war”; “but,” he adds, “the child was not yet weaned.”² We may be quite sure that John Rutledge did not go with him in his efforts to have these changes made, nor can we believe that he was for “revolutionizing all the governments.” We shall soon see him expressing himself most strongly upon this subject, and insisting that the government set up under this resolution of the Continental Congress was but a temporary

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), 171. Printed *Extracts from Journal of Provincial Congress of So. Car.*, 21.

² *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. III, 20, 21.

one, "until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained."

The Continental Congress apparently understood the condition of things in South Carolina, and was apprehensive of the danger and insecurity of a government organized by but a few individuals, "principal gentlemen" though they might be, without the popular assent ascertained in some more direct and authoritative manner and in which so large a part of the province was practically without representation ; it had therefore recommended, as we have seen, that if the Convention of South Carolina should find it necessary to establish a form of government, that it "call a full and free representation of the people" to "establish such a one as in their judgment would best produce the happiness of the people and most effectually secure peace and good order in the colony during the continuance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies." On the 3d of February, 1776, this resolution of the Continental Congress was referred to a committee consisting of the members of the Council of Safety, to whom were added William Henry Drayton, of course, and Colonel George Gabriel Powell and Major Charles Cotesworth Pinckney.

On the 10th of February Colonel Laurens from this committee brought in a report, and an attempt was made to secure its immediate consideration ; but many members opposed such hasty action ; some because they were not prepared for so decisive a measure, and others on the broader ground which had been suggested by the resolution of the Continental Congress that the present members were not vested with that power by the people. In this debate Colonel Gadsden, having brought the first copy of Paine's pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*, boldly declared

himself not only in favor of setting up a government, but for the absolute independence of America.

This declaration, says Drayton in his *Memoirs*, came like an explosion of thunder upon the members. There had been no intimation of such a purpose, there was nothing in the resolution of the Continental Congress upon which the report for a form of government was grounded to suggest such a purpose. That the controversy with the mother country might lead to such a revolutionary attempt had been anticipated and dreaded by many from its very inception, but few at the time were prepared to meet the issue. John Rutledge warmly reproved Colonel Gadsden, pronounced the opinion treasonable, and declared he abhorred the idea; he was willing, he said, to ride post by day and night to Philadelphia to assist in reuniting Great Britain and America.¹ Paine, the author of the pamphlet, was denounced and cursed. Even the few who were ready for independence regretted Gadsden's sudden and inopportune declaration. The Congress, however, in committee of the whole, agreed to report "that in their opinion the present mode of conducting affairs is inadequate to the well governing the good people of the colony; and many regulations are wanting for securing peace and good order during the unhappy disputes between Great Britain and the colonies; and that the Congress should immediately take under consideration what regulations are necessary for these good purposes."²

On the next day the report was unanimously confirmed. It expressly negatived, it will be observed, the idea of independence, declaring that the regulations to be adopted were only intended to secure peace and good order dur-

¹ Drayton's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 172; Johnson's *Traditions*, 41.

² Printed *Extracts from Journal*, 25.

ing the unhappy dispute between Great Britain and the colonies. A committee of eleven was chosen by ballot to prepare and report such a plan or form of government. The committee as composed, represented all shades of opinion, but the Conservative party had a decided majority upon it. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, who had as yet taken no decided position with either party, but was already in the military service, ready for war if necessary, was made chairman. The moderate men were represented by John Rutledge, Charles Pinckney, Henry Laürens, Rawlins Lowndes, Henry Middleton, Thomas Bee, and Thomas Heyward, Jr. The extremists by Christopher Gadsden and Arthur Middleton, with Thomas Lynch, Jr., disposed to act with them.¹

The committee having reported, the Congress on the 5th of March took up the matter for consideration. Mr. Lowndes and those who were with him in opinion earnestly strove for putting off what they thought the evil day. They urged that the recommendation of the Continental resolution should be observed, and that "a full and free representation of the province" should be summoned to consider so important a measure as the adoption of a new form of government, even though it should be but a temporary one. To this sound objection was answered the usual argument of those in power. They said that the Congress only aimed at the happiness and good order of the colony, of which they were as competent to judge as others; that they constituted as full and free a representation as if a new Congress was called, and that time pressed, and they had none to lose.

The extreme conservatives fought the plan of government proposed step by step, and made every effort for

¹ Printed *Extracts from Journal*, 26, 27; *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 174.

postponing its consideration, but without avail. The 8th of March was finally determined upon when the Congress would take the matter into consideration in committee of the whole. From that day until the 21st of March it was discussed day by day. To avoid using the same titles as those under the Royal governments, the style of a *President* was substituted for *Governor*, and that of *Vice President* in the place of *Lieutenant Governor*. It was decided that this Congress was "a full and free representation of the people," and was thenceforth to be deemed and called the *General Assembly of South Carolina*. A *Legislative Council* of thirteen members was substituted for the former *King's Privy Council*, and the Vice President was to be a member and President of it. The legislative authority was vested in the General Assembly and the Legislative Council; an assembly was to be elected every two years.

There was a struggle over the clause that this Congress being "a full and free representation of the people shall henceforth be called the General Assembly of South Carolina," but after some debate the opposition to it was defeated. No division appears to have been had on this question, so that we have no record of the numbers voting, but upon one just after, in relation to the Legislative Council, the Congress divided, by which it appeared that but seventy members out of a body consisting of one hundred and ninety voted. What had become of all the other members? Had they been warned that so important a measure would be introduced?

With less than two-fifths of the House apparently present, less than a fourth of its members declare that being "a full and free representation of the people," they shall henceforth constitute a regular government. Well might Mr. Lowndes strive to postpone action, and induce those

gentlemen of the Low Country to allow a representative body to be called before this attempt was made to set up a government over the whole province. Colonel Richardson had just returned from his triumphal progress through the upper section: was not this the very time to have called upon the people of the whole province to take part in inaugurating a regular, if but a temporary, government? Had Gadsden and Drayton and Middleton listened to the advice of the Continental Congress and to the protest of Mr. Lowndes, the fratricidal strife which followed might possibly have been averted. Of their motives we have now no sufficient data to form a correct opinion. That Christopher Gadsden was a true patriot and a sincere man there can be no doubt, but his wisdom as a leader must be seriously questioned, even if our consideration is restricted to this question alone. It was alike an opportunity and a necessity that in setting up this new government all parts of the province should be fully and freely consulted, and represented. But these gentlemen, the leaders of the Revolutionary party, could not realize that in the twenty years since Braddock's defeat another people had come into the province, who now far outnumbered those on the coast.

The moderate men had fought this proposed constitution step by step and might have defeated it, for they were continuing their opposition to it, when, on the 21st of March, an express brought from Savannah a copy of an act of Parliament passed on the 21st of December, 1775, which had just arrived there, declaring the colonies in actual rebellion, authorizing the capture of American vessels, and legalizing all seizures of the persons and property and of damages done to the colonies before the passing of the act. The receipt of this act silenced, in a great measure, the opposition, and greatly advanced the



measures of the Revolutionary party. On the 24th John Rutledge, from the committee to prepare a plan or form of government, made another report, greatly enlarging the preamble to the proposed constitution as to American grievances and British oppressions. The original preamble which had been reported by the committee was a short one, it being deemed unadvisable to go too much into the details of grievances about which there was so much difference of opinion. But the arrival of this act of Parliament warranted, even in the eyes of moderate men like John Rutledge, more decisive action. The preamble reported, which is in his handwriting, reiterates at length the causes of difference between the mother country and the colonies ; and declares that since Lord William Campbell, the late Governor, had dissolved the General Assembly on the 15th of September, and no other had been called, although by law the setting and holding of general assemblies could not be intermitted above six months, and had withdrawn himself from the colony ; and since the judges of the courts of law had refused to exercise their respective functions, it had become indispensably necessary that during the present situation of American affairs, and until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America could be obtained, "an event which though traduced and treated as rebels we still earnestly desire," some mode should be established by common consent and for the good of the people — the origin and end of all government for regulating the internal polity of the colony. Thereupon, it was first resolved "*That this Congress, being a full and free representation of the people of this colony, shall henceforth be deemed and called the General Assembly of South Carolina, and as such shall continue until the twenty-first day of October next and no longer.*" Provision was made for the elec-

tion of a Legislative Council by the General Assembly out of their own body, and of a President and Vice President, and the legislative authority was vested in the President, General Assembly, and Legislative Council. A new election was to be held on the last Monday in October following, and on the same day in every second year thereafter for members of the General Assembly to meet on the first Monday in December, and to continue for two years. The number of the General Assembly as fixed by this constitution was two hundred and two. Of this number the parishes of St. Philip's and St. Michael, which composed Charlestown, were allotted thirty members, and the other eighteen parishes, excluding St. Mark's, six each. The Low Country, then, was to have one hundred and thirty-eight members, more than two-thirds of the whole number of representatives. To the rest of the province sixty-four members were allowed. The district eastward of the Wateree, that is, what had been known as St. Mark's Parish, now the counties of Clarendon, Sumter, Kershaw, and Lancaster, was allowed ten members; Ninety-Six, ten; Saxe-Gotha, six. The district between the Broad and Saluda, that is, the present counties of Newberry, Laurens, Union, and Spartanburg, was allowed twelve. That between the Broad and Catawba, that is, the present counties of Richland, Fairfield, and Chester, was allowed ten. The New Acquisition, that is, the present county of York, was allowed ten. The district between the Savannah and North Edisto, the upper part of what had been included in Prince William's Parish, now the counties of Barnwell, Aiken, and Edgefield, was allowed six members.

On Tuesday, the 26th of March, the new Constitution was adopted, and it was ordered "that the President of this Congress do sign the same and also the Secretary": which having been done, the members made choice of

William Henry Drayton to be their chairman, by whom they were adjourned as a *General Assembly* to meet at four o'clock in the afternoon. At this hour having re-assembled, the Congress, now called a General Assembly, first proceeded to the choice of a Legislative Council, and elected Charles Pinckney, Henry Middleton, Richard Richardson, Rawlins Lowndes, Le Roy Hammond, Henry Laurens, David Oliphant, Thomas Ferguson, Stephen Bull, George Gabriel Powell, Thomas Bee, Joseph Kershaw, and Thomas Shubrick.

The General Assembly and Legislative Council then proceeded under the provisions of the Constitution to choose by ballot a President and Commander-in-chief and a Vice President. And no better selections could have been made than John Rutledge, who was chosen President, and Henry Laurens Vice President. Both of these gentlemen were earnest in the maintenance of what they conceived to be their rights as English-born freemen; but neither was prepared for separation from the mother country. They both represented the real sentiment of at least the most substantial people in the colony.

They were English Whigs, seeking the redress of their grievances by constitutional means, and in maintaining which they were prepared to shed their blood if necessary, as many Englishmen had done before; but neither was in favor of the New England idea of independence. Had Christopher Gadsden been elected after his declaration in favor of a complete separation from England, there can be little doubt that the revolutionary movement would have ended then in the disruption of the party. But John Rutledge was known to be opposed to a separation from the mother country. Henry Middleton and himself had been acceptable to all parties at the first election for delegates to the Continental Congress in July in 1774,

because on the one hand they had been known to be firm in the maintenance of the rights of the colonies, but on the other opposed to any radical changes in their relation to the Crown. This position John Rutledge had consistently maintained, and in the draft of the preamble to the Constitution first adopted he had been careful to assert that it was adopted during "*the present situation of American affairs and until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained,*" an event which that instrument declared, though traduced and treated as rebel, the people yet earnestly desired. Again in replying to the congratulatory address of the Assembly upon his election he declared that no man would embrace a just and equitable accommodation with Great Britain more gladly than himself. But he was not content even with these declarations; in his address upon the adjournment of the Assembly he took occasion to be still more explicit.

"Show your constituents then," he said, "the indispensable necessity which there was for establishing some mode of government in this colony; the benefits of that which a full and free representation has established, and that the consent of the people is the origin and the happiness the end of government. Remove the apprehension with which honest and well-meaning but weak and credulous minds may be alarmed and prevent ill impressions by artful and designing enemies. *Let it be known that this Constitution is but temporary, till an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained; and that such an event is still desired by men who yet remember former friendships and intimate connections, though for defending their persons and properties they are stigmatized and treated as rebels.*"

This position he steadily maintained with but a temporary exception, and when two years later another Constitution was adopted by the General Assembly, he vetoed it under the power now conferred upon him because it, as

he construed it, closed the door to a reconciliation with the mother country.

On the other hand, William Henry Drayton, who had been elected Chief Justice, seized upon the opportunity of his charge to the grand jury at the first term of the court of sessions held at Charlestown to declare for absolute independence, as Gadsden had done in the Assembly. After explaining to the grand jury some of their common and general duties, he proceeded to expound to them the new Constitution.

"The House of Brunswick," he said, "was yet scarcely settled in the British throne to which it had been called by a free people, when, in the year 1719, our ancestors in this country, finding that the government of the Lords Proprietors operated to their ruin, exercised the rights transmitted to them by their forefathers of England, and casting off the Proprietary authority called upon the House of Brunswick to rule over them — a House elevated to the royal dominion for no other purpose than to preserve to a people their unalienable rights. The King accepted the invitation and thereby indisputably admitted the legality of *that* revolution. And in so doing, by his own act, he vested in our forefathers and in us, their posterity, a clear right to effect *another* revolution if ever the government of this House of Brunswick should operate to the ruin of the people. So the excellent Roman Emperor Trajan delivered a sword to Saburanus, his captain of the Prætorian Guard, with this admirable sentence, 'Receive *this* sword and use it to defend me if I govern well, but against me if I behave ill.'"

The Chief Justice was perhaps not aware how completely he was fulfilling the prophecy of Colonel Rhett when he wrote in 1719, "If the revolt is not crop't in the bud, they will set up for themselves against his Majesty."¹ His honor proceeded : —

"With joyful acclamations our ancestors by act of assembly passed on the 18th day of August, 1721, *recognized* the British Monarch, the

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 3.

virtues of the Second George are still revered among us — *he* was the father of his people, and it was with extacy we saw his grandson, George III, mount the throne, possessed of the hearts of his subjects.

“But alas! almost with the commencement of his reign, his subjects felt causes to complain of government. The reign advanced — the grievances became more numerous and intolerable, the complaints more general and loud — the whole empire resounded with the cries of injured subjects! At length grievances being unredressed and ever increasing, all patience being borne down, all hope destroyed, all confidence in Royal government blasted! Behold the empire is rent from pole to pole! perhaps to continue asunder forever!

“The catalogue of our oppressions, continental and local, is enormous. Of such oppressions I will mention only some of the most weighty.

“Under color of law the King and Parliament of Great Britain have made the most arbitrary attempts to enslave America;

“By claiming the right to *bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever*;

“By laying duties at their mere will and pleasure upon all the colonies;

“By suspending the Legislature of New York;

“By rendering the American charters of no validity, having annulled the most material parts of the charter of the Massachusetts Bay;

“By divesting multitudes of the colonists of their property without legal accusation or trial;

“By depriving whole colonies of the bounty of Providence on their own proper coasts, in order to coerce them by famine;

“By restricting the trade and commerce of America;

“By sending to and continuing in America in time of peace an armed force, without, and against the consent of the people;

“By granting impunity to a soldiery instigated to murder the Americans;

“By declaring that the people of Massachusetts Bay are liable for offences or *pretended* offences done in that colony, to be sent to and tried for the same in England or in *any colony where they cannot have the benefit of a jury of the vicinage*;

“By establishing in Quebec the Roman Catholic Religion and an arbitrary government, instead of the Protestant Religion and a free government.”

Then after elaborating these charges and comparing with great detail the causes of this with the famous Revolu-

tion in England in the year 1688, his honor thus concluded his charge : —

“ The Almighty created America to be independent of Britain ; let us beware of the impiety of being backward to act as instruments in the Almighty hand now extended to accomplish his purpose ; and by the completion of which alone America in the nature of human affairs can be secure against the craft and insidious designs of her enemies who think her prosperity already by far too great. In a word, our piety and political safety are so blended that to refuse our labours in this divine work is to refuse to be a great, a free, a pious, and a happy people ! ”

The Almighty had indeed created America to be independent of Great Britain, and to be the land of a free, a pious, and a happy people. To this end under His providence all things were working. In the very nature of things it was impossible for Parliament in England to legislate for this great country three thousand miles away — miles which had not yet been shortened by steam and electricity. But what argument in the charge had Mr. Chief Justice Drayton advanced to influence those of his fellow-citizens on the coast who still clung to the love of old England beyond their ambition for the future of the new country, or to those in the interior who had felt and recognized no oppression ?

In this bill of grievances against England which the Chief Justice laid before the Grand Jury there was nothing which particularly affected their colony but the general charge that Parliament claimed the right to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever. And in regard to this no one in South Carolina, not even Gadsden, had ever denied its right to bind them except in the matter of taxation. When it was supposed that the Northern colonies were inclined to so general a denial of the powers of Parliament, Mr. Lowndes had declared that no one in

South Carolina admitted the doctrine, and his assertion was not challenged. Then in the matter of taxation it was open to the friends of the Royal government to refer the Chief Justice to his own *Letters of Freeman* in 1769, in which he had strenuously maintained this right of Parliament in that particular, letters which he had republished in London in 1771 with a preface that he did so "that in thus creating to them a longer existence than what usually falls to the lot of fugitive pieces delivered to the channel of a newspaper; he may thereby preserve them as vouchers of the propriety of that political conduct which drew on him the censures of those men from whose ideas of patriotism unconstitutional schemes started into action." Might not they who had then agreed with Mr. Drayton refer him to this little book of his as their voucher of the propriety of that conduct from which they had not been able to change as he had? He had not only left them who still thought as he had done for three years, at least, after he had written those letters; but he was now inveighing against his former friends, as he had once done against those with whom he was now acting. Nay, more, he had outstripped Lowndes and Laurens and Pinckney and Rutledge, and was now with Gadsden, his former adversary, advocating a separation from the mother country.

It is singular, too, that in justifying the great step the Chief Justice does not allude to the real grievances of this colony. He does not point out how the native colonists had been superseded and set aside by the officials of the Board of Trade for the placemen who hung around the throne for recognition and reward for questionable service rendered. He does not point out to the people of the Up Country that it was the wilful neglect and corrupt conduct of that Board in England which had deprived them of courts for the punishment of crime and the mainte-

nance of justice. He does not remind them that the Colonial Assembly on the coast had passed act after act for the purpose of providing courts, and that these acts had been disallowed in England until the Assembly had agreed to buy off Mr. Cumberland, a clerk of the Board who held in England the sinecure of the office of High Sheriff of the province. In the stead of all this he appeals to them to declare themselves independent of England because New England's fishing trade had been interfered with and because the legislature of New York had been suspended, the charter of Massachusetts altered, and the Roman Catholic religion recognized in Quebec. But what had the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who with the Bible containing their own version of the Psalms were enjoying the liberty of conscience in the country they were wresting from the Indians, to do with all that? Were they for the sake of the New England fishermen and the Canadian Protestants to go into a war and expose themselves to the inroads of the Indians, and to set up a government on the coast which was not yet prepared to abandon the Church of England as a church of State? Then, on the other hand, this very matter of church was a most delicate one, even in the Low Country. There the planters were almost all churchmen. Whether from sentiment or piety the whole social and civil fabric was based upon the church. It was interwoven with the very system of government. And while the Chief Justice was appealing to these people from the Bench to go into the Revolution, the Rev. Mr. Tennent, the Congregational minister who had come from Connecticut, and had been so closely associated with him in the mission to the interior the year before, was urging the abandonment of all connection between the government and the church. The Chief Justice had nothing to say to the people of the Up

Country, explaining why they should fight for representation in the Parliament in England at the bidding of a body in which they had had no representation at home.

It was indeed a great political mistake which the small number of the Provincial Congress assembled in Charlestown had made when disregarding Mr. Lowndes's protest that they did not constitute a full and free representation of the people, as the Continental Congress had recommended, they assumed to form a government. It may have been that had they waited for such a representation, no government would have been founded at all, and the revolutionary movement would have been checked. But, on the other hand, the action of the few who attended that Congress in setting up a government without further reference to the people, especially to those of the upper part of the province, added to the opposition throughout that most populous section.

An independent government had existed in South Carolina since the 8th of July, 1774, when the Congress which met under the Exchange in Charlestown appointed an executive committee upon whom it conferred executive powers until it met again.¹ In the measure now adopted South Carolina was the first to set up a formal government in opposition to the King's, and to provide for it a constitution. The plan of government now adopted was styled *A Constitution or Form of Government*, but it was really in no sense a constitution as we in America now understand that term, to wit: an instrument emanating from the people,—the original source of all power, enacted by their immediate representatives chosen for that specific purpose, organizing a government, regulating its administration, and defining and limiting its powers,—an instrument unalterable except by the people who ordained it in

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 741.

convention assembled, or in pursuance of specific provisions indicating and prescribing the form and manner in which changes may be made.¹ This scheme or plan of government did not emanate directly from the people, if indeed it can be said to have done so at all. It did not purpose to be permanent. It imposed no restriction or limitation upon the legislature which adopted it, nor upon any succeeding one; and so we shall see the first General Assembly elected under its provisions abrogating it and by a simple act substituting another. These so-called constitutions of 1776 and 1778 should not be regarded as constitutions at all. It is unfortunate that they were so styled, thus to give occasion to classing South Carolina as a State of many constitutions.² These instruments were but plans of provisional government adopted for the occasion with certainly no more force than an ordinary act of the legislature. That of 1776, which we are now considering, was avowedly of but a temporary or provisional nature—to be in force only “until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America can be obtained.”³

¹ Cooley on *Constitutional Limitations*, 3, 87; Potter's *Discussions on Statutes and Constitutions*, 45, 46.

² Professor Bryce in his work on *The American Commonwealth*, vol. I, 440, speaking of the conservative tendency of some States and the frequent changes in the constitution of others, observes that Virginia and South Carolina (both original States) have had five constitutions each. The truth is South Carolina has had but two constitutions of her own voluntary adoption. As stated in the text, the constitutions, so called, of 1776 and 1778 were in no sense constitutions as we now understand the term. That of 1790 continued for seventy-five years; though three conventions of the people were held in that time, it was not changed by them. The so-called constitutions of 1805 and 1808 were imposed by the Federal government, and enforced through its military authority at the end of the war. The constitution of 1790 and that of 1895 are the only two constitutions proper voluntarily adopted by the people.

³ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. I, 128, 137; *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 186.

As we have seen, John Rutledge, Henry Middleton, and Christopher Gadsden had returned from Philadelphia and had given an account of the proceedings of the Continental Congress. Henry Middleton, pleading his advancing years, declined to return to Congress, and Christopher Gadsden's military duties forbade his doing so. The Provincial Congress had indeed on the 8th of February adopted a resolution hastening his return from Philadelphia and desiring him to assume the command of the troops to which he had been appointed. On the 24th the Congress had gone therefore into another election, and reelected John Rutledge, Thomas Lynch, and Edward Rutledge, and elected Arthur Middleton and Thomas Heyward, Jr., in the place of Henry Middleton and Christopher Gadsden. This election again balanced the two parties; for Arthur Middleton was one of the progressive party while Thomas Heyward was a conservative. Another delegate was added. Thomas Lynch had been seized with a paralytic affection while in Philadelphia, and his son Thomas Lynch, Jr., who was then an officer in Colonel Gadsden's regiment, applied for leave of absence to join his father, that he might be with him in his illness. But this Colonel Gadsden, who with the spirit of the Roman would have devoted his own son to the cause of his country, refused. The matter was speedily arranged by the election of Mr. Thomas Lynch, Jr., as sixth delegate by the unanimous vote of the Assembly. He immediately proceeded to Philadelphia, where he was able to attend his father, and to take his place in the Continental Congress.

On the 23d of March the Provincial Congress resolved —

“ That the delegates of this colony in the Continental Congress, or a majority of them as shall at any time be present in the said Congress, or any one of the said delegates if no more than one shall be present, be, and

they and he are and is hereby authorized and empowered for and in behalf of this colony to concert, agree to, and execute every measure which they or he, together with a majority of the Continental Congress, shall judge necessary for the defence, security, interest, or welfare of this colony in particular and of America in general."

Did this resolution authorize and empower our delegates to join in a declaration of independence of Great Britain?

Gadsden's avowal — in favor of a declaration of the absolute independence of America — had been made on the 10th of February, when, as we are informed by Drayton, it came like an explosion, and was regretted as unwise and imprudent by even the few who wished for independence. Nothing more had been said upon the subject; but on the 24th, after the resolution for a form of government had been agreed to, John Rutledge had reported the new constitution with a preamble which certainly negatived the idea of independence, and in accepting the Presidency under it, as we have seen, had again taken the occasion to repeat that this was but a temporary measure, intended only to continue until a reconciliation could be effected. The resolution of instruction to the delegates while therefore extremely broad in its terms, could not be construed in the light of this contemporary action as authorizing them to commit the colony to a declaration of independence. There can be little doubt that the sense of the province was opposed to any such action.

Mr. Thomas Lynch, Jr., at this time was but twenty-seven years of age. He had been sent at the early age of fourteen to England for his education. He had passed through the school at Eton, had taken his degree at Cambridge, and had commenced his term at the Temple, but had returned in 1772, impatient to take part in the momentous questions arising between the colonies and the mother country. His first appearance as a public

speaker had taken place at a town-meeting at Charlestown shortly after his return, and the interest of the occasion had been much enhanced by his having followed his venerable father in the debate. On the organization of the provincial regiments in 1775, he had been appointed a captain and had, with Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, gone at once into North Carolina on a recruiting tour. Upon his march back with his company which he had completed, he had fallen ill, from the effects of which illness he did not recover, and was compelled soon after joining in the Declaration of Independence to retire from public life. He perished at sea in 1779.

Soon after the announcement by Christopher Gadsden of his readiness for the complete independence of the colonies, he assumed the command of the troops in the harbor with his headquarters at Fort Johnson — the position which throughout the history of the province had been regarded as the key to the defence of the town. Now that a formal government had been set up, and a distinct defiance of the Crown had been made, it behooved the Congress to look well to the defence of the town. On the 19th of February it ordered that 1050 militia should be drafted and immediately marched to the defence of the place. And three days after two more regiments were added to the four already organized. Two regiments of riflemen were ordered to be raised : one to consist of seven companies, and the other of five. Of the first Isaac Huger was made colonel, and of the second Thomas Sumter, who, we must presume, had stood the test of the “sharp eye” Colonel Richardson had promised Mr. Drayton to keep upon his conduct, was made Lieutenant Colonel Commandant.¹

¹ The regular regiments were now thus officered : —

First Regiment of Foot. Colonel : Christopher Gadsden ; *Lieutenant Colonel* : Charles Cotesworth Pinckney ; *Major* : William Cattell.

Second Regiment of Foot. Colonel: William Moultrie; Lieutenant Colonel: Isaac Motte; Major: Francis Marion.

Third Regiment Rangers. Lieutenant Colonel Commandant: William Thomson; Major: James Mayson.

Regiment of Artillery. Lieutenant Colonel Commandant: Owen Roberts; Major: Barnard Elliott.

First Rifle Regiment. Colonel: Isaac Huger; Lieutenant Colonel: Alexander McIntosh; Major: Benjamin Huger.

Second Rifle Regiment. Lieutenant Colonel Commandant: Thomas Sumter; Major: William Henderson.

Artillery Company at Beaufort. Captain: William Harden.

Artillery Company at Georgetown. Captain: Paul Trapier.

Artillery Company at Charlestown. Captain: Thomas Grimball.

} *Volunteers.*



CHAPTER VII

1776

WHEN the Parliament of England met in September, 1775, it was proposed that the naval establishment should be increased to 28,000 men, and the number of ships in the American waters to 80. The land forces were to consist of 25,000 of the best troops in the service. These formidable preparations aroused great opposition, and in defending the estimates Lord Barrington stated the number of effective men in the army at Boston to be 7415; but that the forces in America were increased to 34 battalions, amounting in the whole to 25,000 men. In the course of his statement he thought it necessary to explain that the idea of taxation was entirely given up, but that this force was necessary to secure the constitutional dependence of the colonies. He stated that the purpose of the administration was first to arm so as to be in a position to enforce obedience, and then to send out commissioners to endeavor to conciliate the people in America.¹

The suggestion that the administration was willing to abandon the idea of taxation, lost the government at once the support of many who had upheld coercive measures upon the persuasion that the revenue to be drawn from America would lessen their own burdens. The opposition was therefore greatly strengthened when the matter of supplies came up. Because of the war the land tax was to be raised four shillings on the pound. It was with no little surprise and concern then that the country gentle-

¹ *Annual Register* (1776), vol. XIX, 89.

men learned that the taxation of the colonies was to be abandoned. They declared that if that essential object was to be relinquished, they would grant no money for prosecuting a contest from which no substantial benefit could be derived. The discontent of the landed gentry seriously alarmed the ministry, and their opposition was only allayed by the repudiation of Lord Barrington's statement, and the assurance that the intention of obtaining a revenue from America had never been given up.¹ So this wise measure which would in all probability have secured the return of the allegiance of South Carolina — if of no other colony — was abandoned, and soon after another measure was introduced which, as we have seen, resulted in silencing the moderate party in this colony, and securing the adoption of a constitution and the organization of an independent, if temporary, government. This was the bill prohibiting all intercourse with the thirteen united colonies, — a measure which aroused violent opposition in Parliament, but in the face of which the ministry were unmoved, — a measure which the colonists claimed of itself cut off and separated them from England. It was observed in the debate that the guardian genius of America had that day presided with full influence in the midst of British councils, and inspired the measures of those who directed the affairs of the country — measures calculated to answer all the purposes which the most violent Americans and their most zealous adherents could propose by driving the people in the colonies to unite in an inflexible determination to cast off all dependence on the government in England and to establish free and independent States of their own. It was moved that the title of the bill should be altered and so worded as to express its real meaning, in which case it should

¹ *Annual Register* (1776), vol. XIX, 89, 101.

be styled, a bill for carrying more effectually into execution the resolves of Congress. But in vain were the ministry warned. The bill was passed, and every preparation was made to enforce it.

Before the end of the year Sir Peter Parker, Admiral of the Royal Navy,¹ with the Earl of Cornwallis, who now began a career of distinguished services as soldier and statesman alike in India as in America, sailed with ship *Actæon* and a bomb vessel from Portsmouth to Cork to convoy troops and transports to America. By the 20th of January, 1776, a fleet which was generally supposed to be destined for the Southern colonies was ready to sail; but it was delayed and much time was lost by the objection of the Lord Lieutenant to permit the troops to leave Ireland, so that it was not until the 13th of February that the fleet consisting of forty-three sail and about twenty-five hundred troops put to sea. In a few days it encountered a severe storm and was dispersed. Some of the transports put back to Cork, others got into Plymouth, Portsmouth, and other western ports of England. The expedition was thus unfortunate from the very outset; and the news of its purpose and organization reached General Washington, who was now in command of all the forces of the colonies, before Sir Peter Parker's first vessel appeared off the coast. An intercepted letter of the Secretary of War, dated White Hall, December 23, 1775, had given the information that seven regiments with a full fleet of frigates and small ships were ready to proceed to the Southern colonies to attempt the restoration of the Royal govern-

¹ We have followed the usual custom of speaking of this gallant officer as *Sir* Peter Parker. In fact, however, he was not created a baronet until 1782, and then he was so honored because of his distinguished services in America, and particularly for his gallant, if unsuccessful, conduct in the battle we are about to describe.

ment in that part of America. It was to proceed in the first instance to North Carolina, and thence either to Virginia or South Carolina, as circumstances should determine.

It will be recollected that Lord William Campbell, when he took refuge on the *Tamar*, had declared that he would never return to Charlestown till he could support the King's authority and protect his faithful subjects. It was a singular coincidence that soon after Lord William Campbell had abandoned his government and taken up his abode on the *Tamar*, Governor Josiah Martin of North Carolina had been compelled to relinquish his and to seek refuge on the *Scorpion*. This vessel was then also in Charlestown harbor, so that there then were as we have seen two British Governors without governments on board British vessels lying there. But neither of these had any idea of giving up the struggle for his restoration. Each had been assiduous in his efforts to procure a military force to reduce his province to obedience. Each represented the friends of Royal authority as needing only the support of a small force to give them an opportunity of embodying themselves for the reestablishment of the British government. Lord William Campbell was confident that Charlestown might easily be reduced, and that its reduction would restore the whole province. Governor Martin was equally so that with a little assistance he could set up and maintain a Royal government at Cross Creek, now Fayetteville, North Carolina, where the Scotch Highlanders, who had been intended for the High Hills of Santee in South Carolina, but had been as we have seen carried into the Cape Fear, and had finally settled, were intensely loyal to the Crown. There he expected also to be joined by the late Regulators, a body of desperate men lately rebels to the King's author-

ity, and now hostile to the American cause. Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, was also calling for assistance.

When Boston was evacuated by the British on the 16th of March, the fleet under Admiral Graves bearing the army from Boston lingered for some days in Nantucket road, but at length disappeared entirely from the coast, and the deliverance of Boston was assured. But what would be the destination of the troops thus relieved from Boston was a question which greatly concerned Washington. On the 4th of February the mystery was partly solved by the appearance in New York harbor of Sir Henry Clinton, who had been with the army at Boston and had distinguished himself at Bunker Hill, and who with a part of the squadron had been dispatched from Boston just before its evacuation. He visited New York, as he declared, to have a talk with Governor Tryon, formerly Governor of North Carolina, then Governor of New York. There he met Lord William Campbell and Governor Martin, and after a brief visit, taking these Governors with him, he continued his cruise, avowing his destination to be North Carolina, which was doubted because of his open avowal. It was however true that the coast of North Carolina was the first point of his destination, and there he was to meet Sir Peter Parker sailing directly from England.

The plan appears to have been that the first attempt should be made in North Carolina. That the fleet entering Cape Fear, the force under Sir Henry Clinton should proceed with Governor Martin and Lord William Campbell to Cross Creek, and there to set up a Royal government, around which all the back settlers in the Southern colonies might rally and unite.¹ On his voyage to Cape Fear Sir Henry looked in at Norfolk, but Lord Dunmore not then requiring his assistance, he proceeded

¹ *Annual Register* (1776), vol. XIX, 167.

to the Cape, there to learn that the grand scheme proposed for the establishment of a government in the backwoods of North Carolina had been utterly frustrated by the brilliant victory of General Caswell at Moore's Creek Bridge, where the Highlanders had been defeated and totally broken and dispersed. While waiting the arrival of Sir Peter Parker's fleet, however, Sir Henry landed several parties to reconnoitre the country; and one of them attacked a post at Brunswick, fifteen miles up the river and dispersed its garrison.¹

Sir Peter Parker's squadron did not arrive at Cape Fear till the beginning of May. There they found Sir Henry Clinton. Neither had any definite knowledge of General Howe's situation, as Sir Henry had been dispatched before the evacuation of Boston, and only knew of that event through the American papers. Sir Peter's fleet was intended for the subjugation of the Southern provinces; but General Howe had dispatched a vessel from Halifax, to which place he had retired from Boston to intercept and order the fleet to join him there, but the vessel was delayed and did not reach Cape Fear until the fleet had sailed for Charlestown.² Lord William Campbell, true to his courageous, if not very firm, character, at once offered to serve under Sir Peter Parker as a naval officer, thus to be on hand to resume his government in case of success.

When Washington had been made Commander-in-chief of the American forces, General Charles Lee had been chosen third in command. By a singular coincidence Lee had arrived in New York on the very day Sir Henry Clinton looked so mysteriously into that harbor. It had been determined that Lee should go to Canada to com-

¹ *London Remembrancer* (1776), 189.

² *Annual Register* (1776), vol. XIX, 159.

mand the troops there ; but as it was now presumed that the enemy in the ensuing campaign would direct their operations against the Middle and Southern colonies, Congress divided these colonies into two departments, — one comprehending New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and the other comprising Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, these latter to be under the command of a major general with four brigadiers. In this new arrangement the orders assigning General Lee to Canada were revoked, and he was appointed to the command of the Southern department, where he was to keep watch over the movements of Sir Henry Clinton. Lee was not at all satisfied with the change of his command.

General Lee was a soldier of fortune. He may almost be said to have been cradled in the army, for he received a commission at the age of eleven years. He had had an irregular education, but the art of war had been his especial study from his boyhood. Unfortunately, he imagined that he wielded the pen as well as the sword, and was always meddling as much with the politics of the war in which he was for the time engaged as with the operations in the field, and in regard to the latter he could never confine himself to the limits of his own command. He was undoubtedly a man of brilliant talents and much knowledge and experience in the art of war, but he was wilful, uncertain in his temper, and always more intent upon his own military glory than careful of the interest of the cause in which he was engaged, if, indeed, he was true to it. He had served in the French war in America, in Portugal, and in Poland. When the question had arisen between England and her colonies, he warmly espoused the cause of the latter, and had come to America as early as 1773 and had taken an active part in the political agitations of the country. The soldier whom the Mohawk

warriors had admitted to smoke in their councils and had adopted under an Indian name signifying "Boiling Water," who had served in the famous campaigns of Europe, commanded Cossacks, fought with Turks, talked with Frederick the Great, and had been aide-de-camp to the King of Poland, could not but be regarded as a prodigious acquisition to the patriot cause.¹ But no public estimation could equal the demands of his vanity and egotism. He had come now to a field, however, in which no fame or glory was to be achieved by a professional soldier nor by any one not a "native here, and to the manner born." They who were to succeed in the coming warfare must be untrammelled by the pedantic rules of the profession, must bring to it minds capable of seeing and realizing the novel condition of affairs and of conceiving and carrying out projects regardless of mere military etiquette and the old plans of European campaigns.

However reluctant to abandon the expedition to Canada, General Lee set out for the South on the 7th of March, and on his way gave intelligence to Washington of Sir Henry Clinton, that he had paused at Norfolk in Virginia and then sailed again farther south. Under his orders five hundred Continental troops from Virginia and fourteen hundred from North Carolina were in full march for Charlestown. Sir Henry Clinton having left General Lee, as he supposed, engaged in measures for the defence of New York, was surprised at his arrival in Virginia, where he had stopped on his voyage to Cape Fear, to find Lee there ready to meet him, and still more so upon arriving before Charlestown to find him again in command of the forces for the defence of that place.²

The coast of South Carolina is fringed by a series of

¹ Irving's *Washington*, vol. I, 418.

² *Annual Register* (1776), vol. XIX, 159, 160.



low islands, or sand bars, on the exterior lines of which the receding tide leaves exposed broad beaches formed by gradually shelving shores. These islands are covered with glistening white sands, forming hills which shift with the varying winds. At the time of the Revolution they were covered with palmettoes and myrtle, with here and there a live-oak or a cedar tree. The deep, loose sand affords but poor footing for the movement of troops or carriages of artillery, and the beach could be used for these purposes only at certain stages of the tide. On the interior side of these islands are immense tracts of green salt marsh, extending for miles between the islands and the mainland. These marshes are intersected by labyrinths of narrow serpentine creeks through which the flooding water makes its tortuous way, and often at the spring-tide overflows them, completely obliterating for the time the creeks through which it has come from the sea. At low water these creeks are usually bare. At no time do they afford the means of transportation for armies or supplies. Two of these islands form the natural fortresses to the harbor of Charlestown, and both of them have become famous in the annals of warfare. That on the north, Sullivan's Island, was made so in 1776 by the events about to be narrated. That on the south, Morris Island, was made still more so in the war between the States in 1861-65. Sullivan's Island stretches on the northern side of the harbor for about four miles. At its northern end it is separated from Long Island, of similar formation, by what is now a bold but narrow inlet, but which at that time was said to have been ordinarily fordable. Long Island extends some seven miles up the coast, where it is in turn separated from Dewees' Island,¹ and so on.

¹ Long Island is now known as the Isle of Palms, the pleasure resort of the city of Charleston.

On the 31st of May expresses informed President Rutledge that a large fleet of British vessels was seen off Jeweas' Island, about twenty miles north of Charlestown; and on the 1st of June Sir Peter Parker cast anchor some few miles to the northward of it with upwards of fifty sail of vessels, including transports.¹ The objective point of the joint military and naval expedition of Sir Henry Clinton and Sir Peter Parker was now no longer in doubt. Upon South Carolina was the blow to fall.

General Armstrong, one of the brigadiers of this department, had arrived in Charlestown toward the close of April, and soon after took command of the troops in its vicinity.² Upon learning of the appearance of the British fleet President Rutledge sent expresses to order out the militia, the alarm was fired, the fortifications visited by the President and General Armstrong, and every step was taken for making the best possible defence against an invasion which was now certain and immediate.³ On the 4th of June Major General Lee accompanied by Brigadier General Howe⁴ and some other officers arrived at Haddrell's Point on the mainland just opposite the cove of Sullivan's Island, and after viewing that post and Fort Sullivan — the fort on Sullivan's Island, which had been begun on the 10th of January, and since had been but partially completed — they came up to Charlestown.⁵ Whatever were

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 279.

² *Ibid.*, vol. II, 279, 280; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 140, 141. John Armstrong of Pennsylvania, Brigadier General, Continental Army, March 1, 1776; resigned April 4, 1777; Major General, Pennsylvania militia, January 9, 1778, to close of war.

³ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 279, 280; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 140, 141.

⁴ Robert Howe of North Carolina, Colonel, Second North Carolina Continental Regiment, September 1, 1775; Brigadier General, Continental Army, March 1, 1776; Major General, October 20, 1777; served to close of war.

⁵ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 279, 280; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 140, 141.

the faults of General Lee's character, for the present his arrival excited the public ardor, and seemed to presage happy results ; nor as it was said was he wanting in discourses to inform the public mind as to military matters, or backward in proceeding on horseback or in boats directing military works and ordering such matters to be done as he conceived the crisis demanded.¹

The appearance of the fleet off the bar suppressed for the time, at least, the divisions among the people. Indeed, most of those in Charlestown and the adjoining parishes were united upon resistance to taxation by the British Parliament even to the wager of battle, and the withdrawal of the concession on this point which Lord Barrington had announced and the consequent avowal by the ministry of their intention to raise a revenue in America at the point of the bayonet had left no other course open even to moderate men than resistance or submission. The two parties still differed widely as to the extent to which resistance should be carried. If yet few were for absolute independence, fewer still were for absolute submission. But all now joined heartily in preparing for the struggle. The stores and warehouses on the wharves were levelled with the ground to give room for the fire of the musketry and cannon from the line of earthworks along East Bay. When it is recollected that the commerce of Charlestown was so large at the commencement of these difficulties that Mr. Quincy saw three hundred and fifty sail off the town on his arrival there in 1773, it will be realized how great must have been the value of the property necessary for its accommodation which was thus destroyed. As lead was scarce, the weights from the windows of the houses in the town were taken out by their

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 280 ; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 141.

owners to be cast into musket balls. Works were thrown up, and traverses erected across the streets which might be raked by a fire of the enemy. All men labored with alacrity; some for the sake of example, and others for the usefulness of their labor. In a short time the works were so advanced as to give some sense of security to the inhabitants, encouraging them with hopes of a successful resistance. The public records and the printing-presses had been removed from the town to a place of safety. The *Gazettes* were thus suspended from the 1st of June to the 1st of August.

All possible preparation had now been made, and the people anxiously but firmly waited the result of the battle. It was indeed a terrible trial they were daring; with an improvised army of inexperienced officers, raw recruits, and uncertain militia, they were challenging the power of Great Britain and her combined military and naval forces.

The British fleet had sailed from Cape Fear, and on the 1st of June anchored off Charlestown bar. The time until the 5th was spent in sounding the bar and marking the channel with buoys, and on the 7th the frigates and most of the transports crossed and anchored in Five Fathom Hole. Immediately after a boat with a flag of truce set out from the fleet toward Sullivan's Island, but, unaccustomed to the forms of war, the sentinel in whose beat it approached fired upon it and the boat returned. Colonel Moultrie at once reported the occurrence to President Rutledge, who ordered a flag sent by a discreet officer, explaining the incident to the commanding officer of the British fleet, and assuring him that a messenger from him would be properly received. Colonel Moultrie sent Captain Francis Huger under a flag with a letter of explanation, which was accepted, and a second flag

from the fleet was sent the next day. President Rutledge and Colonel Moultrie would scarcely, however, have been at the trouble of the explanation and apology had they known the use that was to be made of the flag, for instead of a message relating to the conduct of the war, a summons, or other proper subject of communication, the flag brought a proclamation of Major General Sir Henry Clinton, commander of his Majesty's forces in the Southern provinces of North America, warning the deluded people of the miseries ever attendant upon civil war, and entreating and exhorting them to return to their duty to their sovereign, and offering, in his Majesty's name, free pardon to all such as should lay down their arms and submit to his government. The proclamation was received, — no effort appears to have been made to suppress it, — but it produced no effect, no attention was paid to it, nor was any answer given. The transports then moved northwardly, and General Sir Henry Clinton landed four or five hundred men on Long Island. On the 10th the flagship *Bristol* got over the bar with some difficulty, and was soon joined by the remainder of the fleet, which anchored but a league's distance off Sullivan's Island, from which point with the help of glasses all that was going on on Sullivan's Island could easily be seen and the guns counted.¹

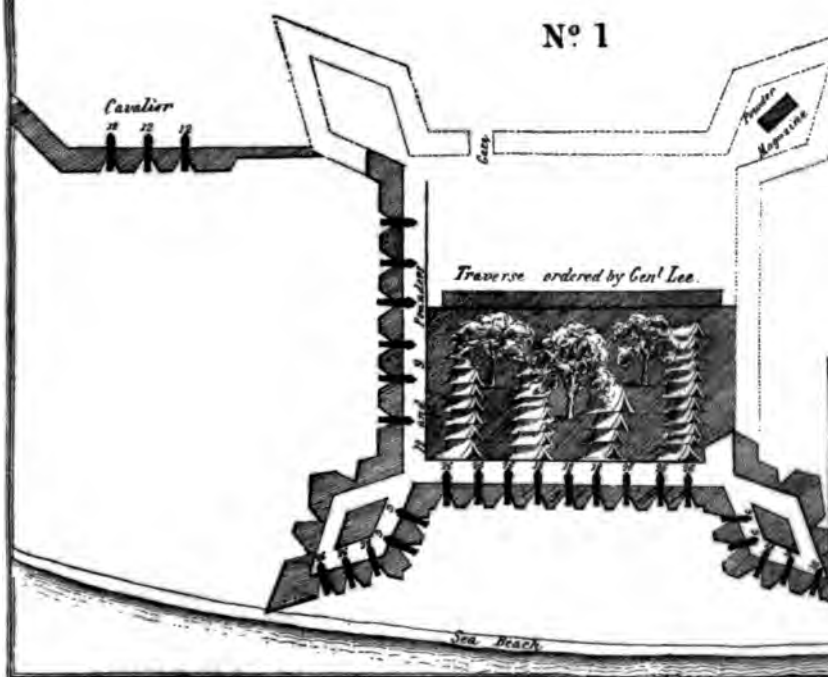
On the 8th General Lee, without consulting or advising with President Rutledge, assumed command and began issuing orders directly to Colonel Moultrie on Sullivan's Island. The South Carolina regular troops had not then, it should be observed, been taken into the Continental line, nor were they until the following September. They were all still upon the establishment of the colony and under the immediate orders of President Rutledge as Com-

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine* (1776), vol. XLVI, 380, 458.

N^o 1 FORT SULLIVAN afterwards called FORT MOULTON

In the unfinished state it was on the 28th June 1776 the numbers opposite each Cannon shew the weight of ball they carried. Only the part of the Fort which is shaded was finished

N^o 2 *Sketch of a Part of Sullivan's Island, the Fort, the Main, and the Shipping during the Attack of the 28th June 1776.*

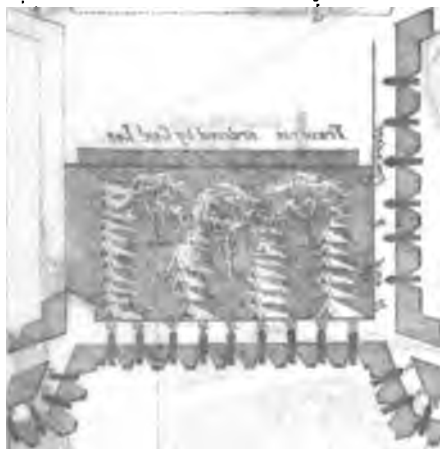




17. FORT SULLIVAN. The fort is a small, rectangular building with a flat roof. It is surrounded by a low wall and a ditch. The fort is located on a hillside. The text "FORT SULLIVAN" is visible on the wall.

18. The fort is a small, rectangular building with a flat roof. It is surrounded by a low wall and a ditch. The fort is located on a hillside. The text "FORT SULLIVAN" is visible on the wall.

19.



mander-in-chief of South Carolina. To avoid, however, any conflict of authority or want of unity of action, President Rutledge on the 9th announced that the command of all the forces, regular and militia, was vested in Major General Charles Lee, and that orders issued by him were to be obeyed.¹ In doing this, however, President Rutledge, fortunately, did not by any means give up the entire control of affairs.

Fort Sullivan as the fort was then called, but which name it was soon to exchange for that of Fort Moultrie, in honor of the hero who was to defend it, was a square with a bastion at each angle, sufficiently large to contain when finished one thousand men. It was built of palmetto logs laid one upon the other, in two parallel rows at sixteen feet distance, bound together at intervals with timber dovetailed and bolted with logs. The spaces between the two lines of logs were filled up with sand, and the merlons were walled or revetted with palmetto logs notched into one another at the angles, well bolted together, and strengthened with pieces of timber. The walls were sixteen feet thick, filled in with sand, and ten feet high above the platforms; the platforms were supported by brick pillars.²

The fort was only finished on the front or southeast curtain and bastions, and on the southwest curtain and

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 280.

² The palmetto, of the logs of which the fort was principally built, is the representative form taken by the palm on the coast of the Southern States of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, and is probably the most hardy of the palms. It sometimes attains a height of fifty feet, and a diameter of twelve or fifteen inches. It is usually very straight, without branches, but covered upon the top with large leaves. Its wood is very porous, soft, and spongy, and thus was singularly suited to the purposes of defence against guns of the caliber in use at the time of the Revolution, a cannon ball entering making no splinters nor extended fractures, but burying itself in the wood without doing hurt to the parts adjacent.

bastion ; the northeastern curtain and the northwestern curtain and bastions were unfinished, being logged up only about seven feet high. The platform, therefore, as finished extended along only the southeastern front of the fort and its southwestern side. Upon these platforms the guns were mounted. On the southeast bastion the flagstaff was fixed, having a blue flag on which was emblazoned the word "Liberty," and three eighteen- and two nine-pounders were mounted there. On the southeastern curtain six French twenty-six-pounders and three English eighteen-pounders were placed, and on the western bastion connected with it three French twenty-six-pounders and two nine-pounders. On the southwestern curtain six cannon were mounted, twelve- and nine-pounders. Connected with the front angle of each rear bastion of the fort, lines of defence then termed cavaliers, which would now be known as epaulements, — hastily constructed sideworks to cover and protect the men and guns, — were thrown up at a small distance on the right and left of the fort, and three twelve-pounders were mounted on each of them ; so the whole number of guns mounted in the fort on each side was thirty-one, of which only twenty-five at any possible time could bear upon the enemy stationed in front of the fort, and even then four nine-pounders in the two inner sides of the front bastions could be scarcely used. Narrow platforms or banquettes were placed along the walls where the plank was raised against them for the men to stand upon and fire through the loopholes.

Such was the condition of the fort on the 28th of June, the day the battle was fought ; but at the time General Lee took command the front and western side of the fort only were finished ; the rear of the fort and the eastern side were not built more than a few feet high, and the fort was not closed. The troops destined for its defence,

to wit : the Second South Carolina Regiment of Infantry amounting to 413, and a detachment of the Fourth South Carolina Regiment, artillery, of 22 men ; the whole 435, of whom 36 were sick and unfit for duty, under the command of Colonel William Moultrie, were encamped in its rear, in huts and booths covered with palmetto leaves. This was called "The Camp"; only the guards were stationed in the fort. Indeed, there was no room for the troops, the mechanics and laborers still at work upon it were so numerous.¹

Nearly midway between Fort Sullivan and Charlestown, on the southern side of the harbor, was Fort Johnson having upward of twenty heavy cannon of French twenty-six- and English eighteen-pounders. Its garrison consisted of the First South Carolina Regiment of Infantry amounting to about 380 men and a small detachment of artillery, the whole under the command of Colonel Christopher Gadsden. Nearer the town on the shore of James Island were about twelve heavy guns which raked the channel approaching Charlestown from Fort Johnson. At this battery Captain Thomas Pinckney was stationed with his company of Colonel Gadsden's regiment.

At the time General Lee took command there were

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 290-291.

The following is the roster of officers present in the fort during the battle : —

Colonel : William Moultrie ; *Lieutenant Colonel* : Isaac Motte ; *Major* : Francis Marion ; *Adjutant* : Andrew Dellient.

Captains : Peter Horry, Nicholas Eveleigh, James McDonald, Isaac Harleston, Charles Motte, Francis Huger, Richard Ashby, Richard Shubrick, William Oliphant, John Blake.

Lieutenants : William Charnock, Thomas Lesesne, Thomas Moultrie, Daniel Mazyck, Jacob Shubrick, Thomas Dunbar, William Moultrie, Jr., Thomas Hall, Henry Gray, Isaac Dubose, Richard B. Baker, Adrian Proveaux, Richard Mason, Peter Gray, Basil Jackson, Gab. Marion. — Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 183.

twelve hundred men on Sullivan's Island and but ten thousand pounds of powder. He from the first disapproved the plan of the defence of the island, and if it had been left to him would have abandoned it. He soon reduced the number of troops and removed a quantity of powder, openly declaring in the fort itself "that it could not hold out half an hour, and that the platform was but a slaughtering stage." He proposed to the President to abandon the fort and island, but this President Rutledge rejected with indignation, declaring that he would cut off his right arm before he would write such an order.¹

General Lee, learning that a body of the enemy had landed on Long Island, at once, at six o'clock A.M., on the 8th, ordered Colonel Moultrie to reconnoitre them, adding that perhaps Colonel Moultrie would see the practicability of attacking the force from the main — an order showing how little he understood the situation. To attack from the main would have required the troops to cross miles of the marsh already described. By eight o'clock he had, however, discovered the impossibility of such a movement, and then ordered Colonel Moultrie immediately to detach Colonel Thomson's, the Third, and Colonel Sumter's, the Sixth, regiments, Captains Alston's, Mayham's, and Couturier's companies to Long Island with orders to attack and if possible to dislodge the enemy there; but he cautioned him that all care should be taken to secure the retreat of the force across the beach from Long Island to Sullivan's Island, and for this purpose he desired Colonel Moultrie to move two field-pieces down to the point commanding the beach. This order, however, was not received until two days after, at seven o'clock, June 10. Moultrie then at

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 141; *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 283.

once prepared to obey it, and intended to embark the troops for this purpose that night ; but by this time it was ascertained that the whole of the British forces were on Long Island, amounting to near three thousand men, under the command of Sir Henry Clinton, who had under him Major General Lord Cornwallis and Brigadier General Vaughn.

Sir Henry Clinton having landed on Long Island with all his troops, made preparations for passing the inlet between that and Sullivan's Island. He threw up two works, one for mortars and the other for cannon ; in addition to which he had an armed schooner and some floating batteries. Against these Captain De Brahm, the colonial engineer, had erected breastworks of palmetto logs on the northeastern point of Sullivan's Island, distant about a mile, supported by a battery of one eighteen-pounder and one brass field-piece six-pounder. Those were supported by Colonel Thomson's regiment, the Third, or regiment of Rangers, the same which came so near mutinying the year before, now consisting of upward of 300 men ; by Lieutenant Colonel Clark with 200 North Carolina regulars, Colonel Daniel Horry with 200 South Carolina troops, the Raccoon Company of 50 Riflemen, and a small detachment of militia ; the whole amounting to about 780 men being under the command of Colonel Thompson. This officer, with the Rangers, had just returned from the expedition under Colonel Richardson.

General Lee was most anxious and restless about the troops on Sullivan's Island, and their means of retreat in case of the fall of the fort, which he deemed inevitable. He proposed to have a bridge built from the island to Haddrell's Point on the main. There were numerous objections to this scheme. In the first place there was no time to build it, and in the second a bridge of nearly

a mile long could be rendered useless by a few shots from the vessels, which he justly expected to reach and take position on the western end of Sullivan's Island to enfilade the fort—the occasion upon which he looked for its destruction and the consequent evacuation of the island. But as there was no time to build a proper bridge, he attempted to improvise one consisting of two planks buoyed up by empty hogsheads and boats anchored across the cove. The inefficiency of such a bridge was at once demonstrated when Lieutenant Colonel Clark with his two hundred North Carolinians attempted to cross upon it going to reënforce Colonel Thomson. It sank before the detachment was half across, and General Lee was obliged to content himself with boats as the means of communicating with the island if retreat became necessary. Upon this subject Colonel Moultrie had no fears, and General Lee's anxieties in regard to it seemed rather to amuse him. "I never was uneasy," he says in his *Memoirs*, "because I never imagined that the enemy could force me to the necessity (of retreating). I always considered myself as able to defend the post against the enemy." We have seen how little General Lee understood the topography of the situation when he proposed to cross troops from the main to attack the enemy on Long Island; under the same mistaken idea he was now possessed by the fear that Sir Henry Clinton would cross his troops from Long Island to the main for the purpose of seizing Haddrell's Point and moving against the town from that quarter. To do this the British would have had to cross at least two miles of marsh, in the mud of which they would have sunk but a few yards from the shore. But Lee was so infatuated upon this point that he strongly reënforced Haddrell's Point with Continental troops under the command of Brigadier General Armstrong, which was in

effect simply withdrawing so much of his forces from any possible participation in the coming battle.

There was still another cause for anxiety, however, in the mind of General Lee and on which he was clearly right. The fort was so situated that the bend of the island permitted approaches to be made on its right flank by the water which extended round the curve of the shore into the cove. Should any vessel, therefore, succeed in passing around and taking position at this point, the platform of the forts on which the guns were placed would be easily enfiladed from that quarter. He therefore directed a *flèche*¹ and screens to be erected to protect the men from such an attack, and a traverse in rear to secure the garrison in case of an attack from the rear. Neither of these works for the protection of the platform was ever attempted.² In this matter General Lee undoubtedly had just cause of complaint against Colonel Moultrie. In letter after letter he urged Moultrie to carry out his orders in regard to these necessary precautions, but in vain. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that General Lee contemplated removing Colonel Moultrie from the command of this fort. On the night of the 27th of June he instructed Colonel Nash of the North Carolina line to report to him the next morning for written orders to take the command of Fort Sullivan, and Colonel Nash was on his way to receive them when the battle began; and even then on the morning of the action General Lee informed President Rutledge as he was leaving to pass over to Haddrell's Point that he was determined to supersede Colonel Moultrie that day if on going down he did

¹ *Flèche*: the most simple kind of field-work, usually constructed at the foot of a glacis, consisting of two faces forming a salient angle pointing outward from a position taken.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 284, 285.

not find certain things done which he had ordered. Colonel Moultrie was an able and exceedingly gallant officer in action; but he was of easy manners and careless disposition, content to leave to others the performance of duties which should have received his own personal supervision. He was a poor disciplinarian and lacked the elementary soldierly characteristic of promptness and punctuality. We must not omit to mention, however, in extenuation of his neglect in this matter that before and during the action he was suffering with gout.¹ Had it not been for his firm and gallant conduct Sullivan's Island would have been abandoned and the glorious victory of Fort Moultrie would not now adorn the history of South Carolina; but nevertheless by his indifference and carelessness that victory was jeopardized, and may have been lost had not the enemy's vessels got aground while attempting to round the cove in order to enfilade the fort as Lee anticipated. Had it not been for his indomitable spirit Charlestown would have been surrendered to General Prévost in May, 1779; while it was owing to the same defect of his character that the battle of Stono was lost in June of that year. But however justly General Lee was determined to resent Moultrie's indifference to orders, he fortunately forbore his determination. Colonel Moultrie was allowed to remain in command, and the victory was won.

The fortifications of the town consisted of a line of batteries, flèches, and bastions beginning on the land just south of what is now known as Bennett's or Halsey's mill pond on the Ashley, then known as Cummins's Point, and extending along South Bay and East Bay to Gadsden's wharf on Cooper River, now the foot of Calhoun Street. The Fourth or South Carolina Artillery Regi-

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 173.

ment and a part of the militia acting as artillery were detailed in detachments to man the guns at these points.¹ The remainder of the town militia were to form at the State House. The militia from the country were to form in that part of Lynch's pasture which was nearest the town, under the command of Brigadier General Howe. The North Carolina troops were to be posted in the rear of the South Carolina country militia, under the immediate command of General Lee. Fire vessels were also prepared for annoying the British vessels, should they be able to pass the forts and present themselves before the town.

The North Carolina troops here mentioned were a part of the 1400 continentals from that State, 200 of whom, as we have seen, were posted with Colonel Thomson on the eastern end of Sullivan's Island to resist the crossing of the British at that point. The whole force now assembled for the defence of Charlestown numbered 6522, to wit: North Carolina continentals 1400, South Carolina regulars 1950, Virginia continentals 500, Charlestown militia 700, country militia 1972.²

The British force consisted of 2200 British regulars under Sir Henry Clinton, and a fleet of two fifty-gun ships, five frigates, and four other vessels, carrying in all 270 guns.³

¹ The militia mentioned as acting as artillery were in all probability the battalion of artillery of which Thomas Grimbald was then Captain, but we can find no more particular mention of them than that in this list.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 282.

³ Sir Peter Parker's squadron consisted of the following ships and vessels, viz.: —

Bristol	guns 50	{ Sir Peter Parker
Experiment	" 50	{ Captain John Morris
Active	" 28	Alexander Scott
Solebay	" 28	William Williams
		Thomas Symonds



The fleet lay within the bar within a league of the fort. On the morning of the 28th of June Colonel Moultrie, riding to the eastern end of Sullivan's Island to visit the post there under Colonel Thomson, observed the enemy's boats in motion at the back of Long Island, as if they intended a descent upon that advanced post, and at the same time he perceived the men-of-war loose their topsails. This being the signal of their getting under way he hurried back to the fort, and on his arrival immediately ordered the long roll to be beaten and the officers and men to their posts.

The guns were scarcely manned and powder issued from the magazine when the British ships were perceived under sail bearing down upon Fort Sullivan, and at the same time, between ten and eleven o'clock, the *Thunder* bombship¹ covered by the *Friendship* armed vessel of twenty-two guns anchored at the distance of a mile and a half and began to throw shells upon the fort, one of which fell upon the magazine, but did no considerable damage. The flood tide being strong and the wind fair from the southwest, the *Active* twenty-eight guns, the *Bristol* fifty guns, the *Experiment* fifty guns, and the *Solebay* twenty-eight guns soon came within easy range of the fort, when its garrison opened fire upon them from the southwestern bastion. But the leading ship,

Actæon	"	28	Christopher Atkins
Syren	"	28	Tobias Furneau
Sphynx	"	20	Anthony Hunt
Friendship, armed vessel	"	22	Charles Hope
Ranger, sloop	"	8	Roger Willis
Thunder, bomb . . .	"	8	James Reid
St. Lawrence, schooner.			Lieutenant John Graves

— *The Remembrancer*, Part II, for the year 1776 (London), 191; *Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle* (London), 1776, vol. XLVI, 380, 381.

¹ *Bombship*: a small vessel very strongly built for carrying the mortars used in bombarding fortifications from the sea. — Craig-Worcester.

the *Active*, regardless of the fire, continued her course until within four hundred yards of the fort, where she anchored with springs on her cable and poured in her broadside. The *Bristol*, *Experiment*, and *Solebay* ranging up in the rear of the *Active* anchored in like manner, leaving intervals between each other. The *Syren* and *Actæon* of twenty-eight guns each and *Sphynx* of twenty, forming a second parallel line, took positions in rear opposite the intervals. The example of the *Active* was followed by the other ships as they took their stations, and a heavy and incessant bombardment began from their batteries, while from the fort a slow but sure return was made. All the while the *Thunder* bombship was throwing thirteen-inch shells in quick succession, several of which fell into the fort. They were, however, immediately buried in the loose sand, so that very few of them burst upon the garrison.

General Lee was not alone in predicting that the fort could not hold out half an hour before such a bombardment. Captain Lemprière, a brave and experienced seaman, who had been master of a man-of-war and was then the captain of a privateer in the service of the colony, the same who had taken the powder the year before off St. Augustine, while visiting Colonel Moultrie after the British ships had crossed the bar, walking on the platform and looking at the fleet, said to him, "Well, Colonel, what do you think of it now?" Colonel Moultrie replied simply, "We should beat them." — "Sir," said he, "when those ships (pointing to the men-of-war) come to lay alongside of your fort, they will knock it down in half an hour." Then said Colonel Moultrie, "We will lay behind the ruins and prevent their men from landing." And now that these ships were before him, pouring in their broadsides of two hundred and seventy guns besides



the mortars from the bombship, — against his twenty-five guns in the fort, — now that these vessels, two of which had twice as many guns as the fort could bring to bear, and four others had each three guns more than he could reply with, and though under great physical suffering, he was still of the same quiet mind and steadfast opinion. He did not for a moment doubt that he “should beat them.”

As soon as the engagement of the fleet had begun, General Sir Henry Clinton made dispositions for crossing the inlet and attacking the troops under Colonel Thomson at the other end of Sullivan’s Island. With two thousand regulars he accordingly marched down from his encampment on Long Island to the edge of the inlet, where it was usually fordable except at high water. He was flanked on his right by an armed schooner, the *Lady William*, and a sloop which had been lying between Long Island and the main, and on the left toward the sea by a flotilla of armed boats from the fleet. These had orders to reach the landing on Sullivan’s Island and rake the platform of the redoubt held by Thomson, while the army crossed over the inlet and stormed the little fort, which was entirely open on the west. Colonel Thomson with his garrison of North and South Carolinians had but two cannon, and they were manned only by his Rangers, who had never before fired a gun larger than a rifle, but who with small arms were the very best of marksmen. The flotilla advanced bravely to the attack, cheered on by the army paraded on the shore within speaking distance of the boats, but Colonel Thomson opened on them so well directed a fire that the men could not be kept at their posts — every ball raked their decks. The flotilla made repeated attempts to reach their destined point, and did come within the range of grapeshot which cleared the decks and dispersed the flotilla.

In the meanwhile Clinton, who had besides his regulars some six or seven hundred marines and boatmen, thus making his force two thousand more than all Thomson had with which to meet them, halted and remained on the shore of Long Island, a quiet spectator of the battle without making any further effort to cross. His excuse was that he found the inlet which he had been led to suppose was fordable, impassable, and that he had no boats in which to cross his men. It appears that the passage at that time was more difficult than usual because of a long series of easterly winds which had increased the height of the tide. But this explanation was not received at home as a sufficient excuse for the disaster which befell the expedition because of Sir Henry's failure to coöperate with the fleet. To suppose, it was said, that the generals and the officers under their command should have been nineteen days in that small island without ever examining until the very instant of action the nature of the only passage by which they could render service to their friends and fellows, fulfil the purpose of their landing, and answer the ends for which they were embarked upon the expedition, would seem a great defect in military prudence and circumspection.¹

¹ *Annual Register* (London), 1776, vol. XIX, 162; Botta's *History*, vol. I, 338. The opposition papers in England ridiculed the excuse, one of them, the *St. James Chronicle*, in an epigram:—

"A MIRACLE ON SULLIVAN'S ISLAND

"By the Red Sea the Hebrew host detained
Through aid divine the distant shore soon gained;
The waters fled, the deep a passage gave;
But thus God wrought a chosen race to save.

"Though Clinton's troops have shared a different fate
'Gainst them, poor men! not chosen sure of heaven,
The miracle reversed is still as great—
From two feet deep the water rose to seven."

— *Johnson's Traditions*, 95.

The bombardment of the fort continued, says a British account, whilst the thunder from the ships seemed sufficient to shake the firmness of the bravest enemy, and daunt the courage of the most veteran soldier. The return made by the fort could not fail of calling for the respect as well as of highly incommoding the brave seamen of Britain. In the midst of that dreadful roar of artillery the South Carolinians stood with the greatest constancy and firmness to their guns, fired deliberately and slowly, and took a cool and effective aim. The ships suffered accordingly; they were torn almost to pieces, and the slaughter was dreadful. Never did British valor shine more conspicuously, nor ever did their marine in an engagement of the same nature with any foreign enemy experience so rude an encounter.¹

And now General Lee's fears in regard to the danger from an attack upon the fort from the cove side would have been realized but for an accident to the fleet. The *Sphynx*, *Actæon*, and *Syren*, the ships of the second line, were ordered about twelve o'clock to pass the fort and take a position toward the cove of Sullivan's Island for the double purpose of enfilading the front platforms on the southeast curtain and its two bastions whose fire was so destructive to the British ships and crews, and also to cut off communication between Sullivan's Island and Charlestown. Fortunately the manœuvre failed. To make the movement the frigates stood over toward the shallow middle ground opposite to the fort so as to pass clear of the line of ships then closely engaged, and in doing this the *Actæon* and *Sphynx* ran foul of each other, and the three stuck fast on the shoal on which Fort Sumter has since been built and stands. The *Syren* got off, as did the *Sphynx*, with the loss of her bowsprit, but the *Actæon*

¹ *Annual Register* (London), 1776, vol. XIX, 161.



was left immovable on the shoal. The *Syren* and *Sphynx* now withdrew, and bearing away under cover of the ships engaged retired to prepare themselves for further action. The *Thunder* bombship, too, having thrown fifty or sixty shells with little effect, ceased firing. She had anchored at too great a distance and was therefore compelled to overcharge her mortars, the recoil of which shattered the beds and so damaged the ship as to render her unfit for further service. The combat was now kept up only by the four ships first engaged, but in the afternoon the British fire was increased by a reënforcement of the *Syren* and *Friendship*.

The fire of the fort was principally directed at the *Bristol* and *Experiment*, carrying each fifty guns, and they suffered most incredibly. The first was the flagship on board of which was Sir Peter Parker and with him Lord William Campbell, who had volunteered his service and was complimented with the command of her lower deck. Sir Peter received two wounds, but gallantly remained at his post, encouraging his men and reënforcing his ship from other vessels. Lord William Campbell received a wound in his side, which was at first reported to be not of a serious character, but from the effects of which he ultimately died.¹ Early in the action the *Bristol* had the spring of her cable shot away, which caused her to lie end on to the battery, and was raked fore and aft. She lost upwards of one hundred men killed and wounded. Captain Morris received a number of wounds, but with noble obstinacy disdained to quit his post until his arm was shot off; he died a week after. Perhaps, it was said, another instance of such slaughter could not be produced; twice the quarterdeck was cleared of every person except Sir Peter,

¹ Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. II, 284; Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. I, 147; Botta's *History*, vol. I, 338.

and he was wounded. The vessel had nine shots in her mainmast, which was so much damaged as to be obliged to be shortened; the mizzenmast had seven thirty-two-pounders, and had to be cut away. The day was very sultry with a burning sun, the wind very light, and the water consequently smooth. But for this it is probable the *Bristol* could not have been kept from filling, as she was hulled in many places and otherwise so damaged that the carpenters of the squadron were called to her for assistance while the battle raged in all its fury. The *Experiment* suffered almost as much as the *Bristol*. Captain Scott her commander, like Captain Morris, lost his right arm, and was otherwise so badly wounded that his life, too, was at first despaired of. The number killed and wounded on the *Experiment* was about the same as upon the *Bristol*. All the while the battle raged barges were passing from one ship to the other and to and from the transports, removing wounded and bringing fresh men as occasion required. So great was the slaughter on board these two ships that a remonstrance was made to Sir Peter Parker that if the fire from the fort continued, the two ships and their arms would be entirely destroyed; indeed, their abandonment was in contemplation when the fire from the fort slackened from want of powder.

The fort, on the other hand, had not escaped with impunity. Three or four of the fleet's broadsides striking the merlons at the same moment shook the slight work to its foundation, and it was apprehended that a few more would realize Lee's predictions and tumble the whole fabric down. Owing, however, to the peculiar character of the palmetto logs of which the fort was built, comparatively little damage was done, save in the concussion and shaking of the framework. Though the ships which were to have gained position at the cove failed to do so, yet even from the

position the ships had reached the southwestern curtain of the fort was so enfiladed and the guns were so often struck that it was apparent that had they reached that point, unless beaten off by the batteries at Haddrell's Point at long range, the fort in all probability would have proved the slaughter pen Lee had predicted. Soon after the action began the three twelve-pounders which were in the cavalier or interior bastion were abandoned, the works not being sufficiently high to protect the men who manned them.

The flagstaff of the fort was shot away some time after and fell with the flag outside the fort. Upon this Sergeant Jasper of the Grenadiers of the Second Regiment leaped down from one of the embrasures, and tearing the flag from the staff returned with it through a heavy fire from the shipping, and fixing it upon a sponge staff planted it once more on the summit of the merlon amidst a rain of shot and shell; then giving three cheers returned to his gun, which he continued to serve throughout the engagement.¹

While the battle was raging General Lee dispatched a letter by one of his aides, ordering Colonel Moultrie if he should expend his ammunition without beating off the enemy to spike his guns and retreat with all order

¹ The example of Sergeant Jasper was repeated, not once or twice, but over and over again, at Fort Sumter and Battery Wagner during the siege of Charleston in 1863-64. At Fort Sumter twenty instances were officially reported — more occurred. Several instances were made subjects of Department General Orders. In this connection the names of twenty-seven officers and men appear with honorable mention in the reports of the commanding officer of Fort Sumter. At Battery Wagner the commanding officer reports with honorable mention the names of six officers and men. See *Defence of Charleston Harbor* (Johnson); *Flag-raising* (Sumter), 123, 131, 178, 179, 180, 190, 212, 213, 214; *Flag-raising* (Wagner), 106, Ap. lxxxv.

possible. Colonel Moultrie was thus placed in a most embarrassing position. If he exhausted his ammunition, he was to desert the fort and thereby to permit Colonel Thomson at the extreme end of the island to be cut off with the whole of his command. But as he was not required by this order to abandon the fort as long as he had ammunition, he determined to save it as long as possible. By slackening the discharges of his guns to intervals of about ten minutes each, he was enabled so to protract the defence and to save the day. The powder, however, being much reduced and a rumor spreading in the fort that the British troops had effected a landing between Colonel Thomson and the fort, Moultrie ceased firing almost entirely, reserving his ammunition for the troops he believed to have effected a landing. This was between three and five in the afternoon. The cessation of the fire was so complete that the British at this time believed that the fort was silenced. President Rutledge however succeeded in sending Moultrie five hundred pounds of powder with a note predicting "honor and victory," and adding by way of postscript, "Do not make too free with your cannon—cool and do mischief." This supply of powder enabled Moultrie to resume his fire at shorter intervals during the rest of the day. About the time the supply of powder sent by Rutledge arrived General Lee came over in a boat from Haddrell's Point through the British line of fire, and ascending the platform of the fort he pointed two or three of the cannon which were discharged against the enemy. He remained a quarter of an hour, then saying to Colonel Moultrie, "I see you are doing very well here—you have no occasion for me—I will go up to town again," he left the fort, and returned to Haddrell's Point through the same line of fire in which he had come.

About five o'clock in the afternoon Colonel Muhlenberg of Virginia, with 700 continentals, crossed over from Haddrell's Point and reënforced Colonel Thomson, thus rendering his position more secure against any further attempt from Long Island.

The total number killed in the fort was twelve and the wounded twenty-five. The dying words of Sergeant McDaniel of Captain Huger's company will be remembered as long as the story of the battle is told.¹ He was cruelly mangled by a cannon ball, yet life and vigor remained long enough to enable him to call to his comrades, "Fight on, my brave boys; don't let liberty expire with me to-day."

On the other side the *Bristol* alone had upward of one hundred men killed and wounded and the *Experiment* not much less. Each of their captains lost an arm and died a few days after. The *Solebay* had twelve killed and wounded and the *Active* seven. Thirty-seven were killed and wounded in the fort, over two hundred in the fleet. The proportion of loss in the fleet was scarcely less than six to one over that in the fort. The fort expended about 4766 pounds of powder, the fleet about 34,000 pounds.

The firing had continued until near seven o'clock in the evening when it slackened with the setting sun, and at half-past nine it ceased on both sides. At eleven the ships slipped their cables without any noise or piping and returned with the last of the ebb tide to their former anchorage near Five Fathom Hole. When the morning of the 29th of June broke upon the scene the *Actæon* lay fast ashore at the distance of about a mile from the fort.

¹ In accounts given of this battle the name of the hero has usually been given as McDonald, but Drayton gives McDaniel as the true name. *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 303.

The rest of the men-of-war and transports were riding at anchor opposite Morris Island, while Sir Peter Parker's broad pennant was hardly seen on a jury mast considerably lower than the foremast of his ship. The blue flag with the crescent and the word "Liberty" still gently waved in the wind from the sponge staff to which it had been fastened by Jasper. Boats were passing and repassing in safety between the fort and town, and the hearts of the people were throbbing with gratitude and exultation. The garrison at Fort Moultrie fired a few shots at the *Actæon*, which were promptly and gallantly returned from her by Captain Atkins, when, to prevent her falling into the hands of the Americans, he set fire to her, taking off her crew in small boats, leaving her colors flying and her guns loaded. But this did not prevent a party under Lieutenant Jacob Milligan of the Carolina ship of war *Prosper* from boarding her while on fire. This party pointed and fired three of her guns at the British commodore, and stripping her of what the pressing moments permitted brought off her colors, ship's bell, and as much of her sails and stores as his boats could contain. Milligan had scarcely done this when the *Actæon* blew up with an awful explosion.

On the 30th of June in the afternoon, General Lee and staff reviewed the garrison at Fort Moultrie and thanked them for their heroic defence, and on the 4th of July President Rutledge visited the garrison, and taking his own sword from his side presented it to Sergeant Jasper as a reward for his bravery and an incitement to further deeds of valor.

Excluding Lexington which ushered in the war, and Yorktown which ended it, the battle of Fort Moultrie must rank with the three most complete and decisive American victories of the Revolution. It was the first

absolute victory. The next was Saratoga, and the third the culmination of the long series of smaller affairs at King's Mountain. Bunker Hill was a gloriously fought battle, and did much to establish the first confidence of the Americans in the efficacy of their own ability and valor; but the military advantage of the struggle lay with the British. Princeton and Trenton were brilliant military strokes, which did much to revive the failing spirits of the time, but besides this were productive of no decisive or lasting results. The victory of Fort Moultrie in its moral aspect was as valuable to the cause as Bunker Hill, but it was far more so in the consequences which followed, and the advantages it secured. At Bunker Hill the American troops had exhibited the highest qualities of valor and steadfastness, but the object of the struggle was not attained — the position was ultimately abandoned. At Fort Moultrie they had fought with no less valor and fortunately with the most brilliant success. They had not only resisted but utterly defeated the supposed invincible British navy. The little log fort had withstood the broadsides of some of the largest vessels in his Majesty's service, but the material results were far greater. The expedition which so confidently set out to crush and subjugate the Southern colonies was utterly defeated, and these colonies were relieved for three years from invasion, to remain a source of strength and supply to their friends at the North while the war waged there. The victory at Saratoga put an end to the grand strategy by which the New England States were to be cut off and permanently separated from the others, thus it was confidently believed practically to end the war. The culminating victory of King's Mountain recalled Cornwallis from the further prosecution of his victorious career, and put an end to the grand movement by which the war was



to be carried "from South to North," and gained time for the coming of the second French fleet. The battle of Fort Moultrie was the first of these great achievements and victories, nor was it the least brilliant of them. Carolinians, North and South, may well remember "Palmetto Day," and glory in its fame, for Carolinians only were actively engaged in that great battle; it was South Carolina blood only that was shed on the ramparts of the fort; it was owing only to John Rutledge that the battle was fought, and to William Moultrie that the victory was won; and yet amidst our rejoicing and pride it is well for us to remember that the result of the battle was, in a manner more than ordinarily manifest, in the hands of the God of Battles by whose behest the east winds blew, which prevented the British force from crossing the inlet to the attack, and to the confusion of the enemy's vessels, and their grounding upon the shoals when moving to take advantage of our hero's error.



CHAPTER VIII

1776

JOHN ADAMS in his Diary¹ states that when the Congress assembled in May, 1775, the members appeared to be of one mind, and that, after his own heart, namely, that the Congress ought to recommend to the people of every State in the Union to seize on all the Crown officers and hold them with civility, humanity, and generosity as hostages for the security of the people of Boston, and to be exchanged for them as soon as the British army would release them; that it ought to recommend to the people of all the States to institute governments for themselves under their own authority, and that without loss of time; that it ought to declare the colonies free, sovereign, and independent States, and then inform Great Britain they were willing to enter into negotiations for the redress of all grievances and a restoration of harmony between the two countries upon permanent principles.

The gentlemen of Pennsylvania who had been attached to proprietary interests and owed their wealth and honors to it, and the great body of the Quakers, he says, had hitherto acquiesced in the measures of the colonies or at least had made no professed opposition to them. But now these people began to see that independence was approaching, they started back. In some of his public harangues in which, as he asserts, he freely and explicitly laid open his thoughts, on looking around the assembly he saw horror, terror, and detestation strongly marked on

¹ *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. II, 408, 409.

the countenances of some of the members whose names however he would not record.

But he goes on to state that in some of the earlier deliberations in May, 1775, after he had reasoned on his own plan, Mr. John Rutledge in more than one public speech approved of his sentiments, and that the other delegates from South Carolina — Mr. Lynch, Mr. Gadsden, and Mr. Edward Rutledge — appeared to him to be of the same mind. He relates that Mr. Dickinson told him afterwards that when Congress first came together the balance lay with South Carolina, and that accordingly all the efforts of the opponents of independence were employed to convert the delegates from that State. The proprietary gentlemen and Quakers, he says, addressed themselves with great assiduity to all the members of Congress whom they could influence, even to some of the delegates of Massachusetts, but most of all to the delegates from South Carolina. Mr. Lynch, he says, had been an old acquaintance of the Penn family, particularly of the Governor. Mr. Edward Rutledge had brought his lady with him, a daughter of their former President, Mr. Henry Middleton. Mr. Arthur Middleton, her brother, he states, was now a delegate in place of his father. The lady and gentlemen were invited to all entertainments and were visited perpetually by the party, and they soon found that Mr. Lynch, Mr. Arthur Middleton, and even the two Rutledges began to waver and to clamor about independence. Mr. Gadsden was either, from despair of success, never attempted, or if he was he received no impression from them. He says he himself became the dread and terror and abhorrence of the party. But all this he avers he held in great contempt. Arthur Middleton, whom he ridicules, became, he says, the hero of Quaker and proprietary politics in Congress.

This account of the state of parties by Mr. Adams is given as part of his Diary of 1775; but it is manifest from the contents that it was not written at any time during that year; and from the confusion of persons it was probably not written until long after — so long after that characters and dates had all become confused in his mind. Arthur Middleton who he says was *now*, *i.e.* in 1775, a delegate in the place of his father and the hero of the conservatives, was not in Philadelphia at that time, but was in South Carolina, where as one of the Council of Safety he with William Henry Drayton was leading in Gadsden's absence the extreme party. From the 14th of June, 1775, he was constant in his attendance upon the Council of Safety in Charlestown. His father Henry Middleton, John Rutledge, and Christopher Gadsden returned from the Congress as we have seen soon after the 1st of February, 1776, and did not, any one of the three, return again to it. Arthur Middleton was not elected a member of Congress until the 24th of February, 1776, so that there was no time when Arthur Middleton, the two Rutledges, and Gadsden were in Philadelphia together. John Rutledge was elected President under the new Constitution on the 26th of March, and remained in South Carolina. Christopher Gadsden had been recalled by the Provincial Congress and requested to remain in the performance of his duties in the command of the troops, which he did. From March, 1776, the delegation from South Carolina in the Continental Congress consisted of Edward Rutledge, Thomas Lynch, — who was soon after joined by his son Thomas Lynch, Jr., — Arthur Middleton, and Thomas Heyward, Jr. Mr. Adams was probably just as much mistaken in regard to John Rutledge's support of his, Adams's, views in regard to independence, for John Rutledge was throughout the whole struggle until

the Declaration of Independence consistent in his desire to keep open the door to a reconciliation with the mother country, and even after that, two years later, resigned the Presidency rather than approve a change in the Constitution which he considered as closing the door to such a happy consummation.

The truth is there was no change in the views either of those in Pennsylvania or South Carolina who now hung back unwilling to follow Massachusetts and Virginia in their scheme of independence and separation — the change was in the advocates of this radical, if necessary, measure, not in those who opposed it. Mr. Adams himself afterward declared that "there was not a moment during the Revolution when I would not have given everything I possessed for a restoration of the state of things before the contest began, provided we could have had a sufficient security for its continuance;" that is, as has been observed, it was with him a matter of security. If he could be secured of the rights for which he was contending without separation, he was not only willing, but would have preferred it at any cost. Independence of England to him even then was not desirable in itself. So, too, Colonel Joseph Read writes to Washington from Philadelphia early in March that there was a strong reluctance in the minds of many to cut the knot which ties us to Great Britain, particularly *in this colony and to the southward*. Again, on the 15th of the same month, he writes, "It is said the Virginians are so alarmed with the idea of independence that they have sent Mr. Braxton on purpose to turn the vote of that colony, if any question should come before Congress." And, in reply, Washington admits that the people of Virginia, from their form of government and steady attachment heretofore to royalty, will come reluctantly to the idea of independence. A few days before the battle of

Lexington, Franklin in England testified that he had more than once travelled almost from one end of the Continent to the other, and kept a variety of company, eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely, and never had heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for a separation, or a hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America. Mr. Jay was quite as explicit ; he declared that until the second petition of Congress in 1775 he never heard an American of any class or description express a wish for the independence of the colonies, and that it had always been his opinion and belief that our country was prompted and impelled to independence by *necessity* and not by *choice*. Mr. Jefferson affirmed, "What eastward of New York might have been the disposition toward England before the commencement of hostilities, I know not, but before that I never heard a whisper of a disposition to separate from Great Britain; after that its possibility was contemplated with affliction by all."¹ James Iredell of North Carolina, afterward a Justice on the Supreme Bench of the United States, in a very able pamphlet written at this time, June, 1775, says : —

"I avoid the unhappy subject of the day, *independency*. There was a time very lately within my recollection when neither myself nor any person I knew could hear the name but with horror. I know it is a favorite argument against us, and that on which the proceedings of Parliament are most plausibly founded, that this has been our aim since the beginning, and all other attempts were a cloak and disguise to this principal one . . . this suspicion though so ill founded has been professedly the parent of all the violent acts that now irritate the minds of the Americans. Some are inflamed enough to *wish* for independence, and all are reduced to so unhappy a condition as to dread at least that they shall be compelled in their own defence to

¹ See these quotations collected and cited by Mr. Sabine. *The American Loyalists*, 67, 68.

embrace it. I profess of the latter number, in exclusion of the former. I am convinced America is not in such a situation as to entitle her to consider it as a just object of *ambition*, and I have no idea of a people forming a constitution from *revenge*. A just and constitutional connection with Great Britain (if such could be obtained) I still think, in spite of every provocation, would be happier for America for a considerable time to come than absolute independence."¹

Mr. Sabine in his work on the American Loyalists shows conclusively that the impression that Whigs *proposed*, and the Tories *opposed*, independence at the commencement of the controversy is entirely erroneous; that the controversy had been going on quite fourteen years before the question of independence was made a party issue, and even then *necessity* not *choice* caused a dismemberment of the empire.² Of this necessity the people of South Carolina generally were not yet convinced, nor indeed were they prepared to go to this length to redress grievances which were in the main to them purely theoretical.

When, therefore, the delegates from Virginia on the 7th of June, 1776, moved in obedience to instructions from their constituents that the Congress should declare that these united colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent States; that they absolve all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved, Edward Rutledge, the only one of the original delegation from South Carolina then in Congress, joined John Dickinson and James Wilson of Pennsylvania and Robert R. Livingston of New York in opposing the resolution. These delegates declared that though they were friends to the measure

¹ *Life and Correspondence of James Iredell*, vol. I, 321, 322.

² *The American Loyalists* (Lorenzo Sabine), 69.

themselves, and saw the impossibility that they should ever again be united with Great Britain, yet they were against adopting them at that time. That it was wise and proper to defer taking so decisive a step till the voice of the people drove them into it. That the people were the power, and without them these declarations could not be carried into effect. That besides South Carolina the people of the Middle colonies — Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York — were not yet ripe for bidding adieu to British connection. That the resolution entered into on the 15th of May, for suppressing the exercise of all powers derived from the Crown, had shown by the ferment into which it had thrown the Middle colonies that they had not yet accommodated their minds to a separation from the mother country. That some of them had expressly forbidden their delegates to consent to such a declaration, and others had given no instructions, and consequently their delegates had no powers to give such consent. These and other reasons were urged against the resolution of independence. On the other hand, John Adams of Massachusetts, George Wythe and Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, urged that the question was not whether by a declaration of independence they should make themselves what they were not, but whether they should declare a fact which already existed; that as to the people or Parliament of England they had always been independent of them, these restraints upon the trade of America deriving efficacy from acquiescence only, and not from any rights Parliament possessed of imposing them; that all connection had been dissolved by the commencement of hostilities; that they had been bound to the King by allegiance, but that the bond was now dissolved by his assent to the late act of Parliament by which he declared the colonists out of his

protection; that the people waited for the Congress to lead the way.¹

These debates clearly showing that the colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina were not yet ready for the declaration, it was thought most prudent to wait awhile for them and to postpone the final decision to July the 1st; but in the meanwhile a committee was appointed to prepare a declaration of independence.²

On Friday, the 28th day of June, the day upon which the first decisive victory was gained by American arms in the struggle with the mother country, that of the battle of Fort Moultrie in Charlestown harbor, Thomas Jefferson from the committee appointed for the purpose reported his draft of a declaration of independence. It was read and ordered to lie on the table. On Monday the 1st of July the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole and resumed the consideration of the original motion made by the delegate from Virginia. The debate was carried on throughout the day. The delegates from New York declared that while they were for the declaration themselves and were assured that so also were their constituents, that their instructions having been drawn near a twelvemonth before when reconciliation was still the general object, they were enjoined to do nothing which should prevent it. They therefore thought themselves not justified in voting on either side, and asked leave to withdraw from the question, which was given them. The vote was then taken, when New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia voted

¹ *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. I, 10; *Elliot's Debates on the Constitution*, vol. I, 84-88.

² *Ibid.*

for the Virginia resolution, that the Congress should declare that the colonies were, and of right ought to be, free and independent States. Pennsylvania and South Carolina voted against it, and as the two delegates from Delaware were divided, that vote was not counted upon either side. The vote of the delegates from Georgia was for the declaration, but the delegation from that colony represented few but themselves ; Georgia was the youngest, the weakest, and the most loyal of all the colonies. The committees of the whole rose and reported their resolution to the House. Before action was taken, however, by the House in open Congress, Mr. Edward Rutledge rose and requested that the determination might be put off to the next day, as he believed his colleagues, though they disapproved of the resolution, would then join it for the sake of unanimity. This was agreed to, and the vote was accordingly postponed to the next day.¹

And so it happened that on the 28th day of June, 1776, the destiny of South Carolina was in the hands of two men widely separated from each other, — brothers — John and Edward Rutledge, — one at home assuming the responsibility and forcing the issue of battle with the British fleet and army, and obtaining the first great victory of this war ; the other at Philadelphia assuming the responsibility of committing his people to a policy which they had not approved, and thus securing the union of the colonies in the Declaration of Independence.

The delegation from South Carolina were certainly in an embarrassing position. South Carolina they knew had joined in the movement from the first more because of sympathy with the New England colonies because of their treatment by Great Britain than from any actual pressure

¹ *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. I, 10 ; *Elliot's Debates on the Constitution*, vol. I, 88, 89.

of hardship and wrong upon the colony itself. The present government in England had grossly abused the appointing power, and had refused to allow the necessary courts for the increased population of the colony until it had bought off the patent office-holders who had been so unworthily forced upon their people. But these were local grievances which the Congress in all their discussions had not thought worthy of enumeration in the wrongs of which they were complaining; and which, indeed, were so in accordance with the spirit of the times as scarcely to be urged by the Carolinians themselves. Then, too, these troubles were of a character which they hoped could be remedied by a change in the ministry without resort to the extreme remedy of revolution. The stern and cruel commercial code which was at the bottom of all the trouble was not felt practically in South Carolina, though rice was one of the enumerated articles. The people, as we have seen, were planters and not sailors, and were content that the mother country should have the carrying of their produce. The merchants of South Carolina, unlike those of the Northern colonies, were almost to a man opposed to revolution. Again, the people of South Carolina had been forced to realize in the outset that though they might be led into a war from sympathy with the wrongs of the Northern colonies, those colonies were too far distant to assist them in return. The troops of the Northern colonies had joined the Virginians in Braddock's campaign, and those of Virginia and the Middle colonies were now under Washington before Boston. South Carolina had been left to her own resources for defence against the Spaniards and Indians, and now while her delegates did not know of the victory of Fort Sullivan, they did know that South Carolina was left to meet the grand naval and military expedition that had sailed to

attack Charlestown as best she might with the assistance only of North Carolina, and possibly of some few troops from Virginia. But more than all this Middleton and Heyward and the younger Lynch had just come from home, where they had heard Gadsden's avowal of his desire for independence, and had witnessed the excitement which that declaration had aroused. They had heard the new Constitution discussed, and knew that Gadsden's policy had been expressly repudiated in its preamble. Arthur Middleton himself, it is true, had been a leader of the extreme party in South Carolina, but as such he probably best realized how weak it was in numbers. Thomas Heyward, Jr., had been sent with Middleton, and Heyward had always belonged to the moderate party. Thomas Lynch, Jr., had still more lately joined them, and now, no doubt, like his father, was influenced by the conservative element in Philadelphia. The active delegation from South Carolina was thus composed of a younger set. Middleton, the eldest of them, was but thirty-three years of age, Heyward but thirty, and Rutledge and Lynch were but twenty-seven. The delegation together averaged but little over twenty-nine years. It has been said that in South Carolina generally the fathers were Tories and the sons were Whigs. It is more than likely that both the elder Middleton and Lynch were glad to leave to their sons the severance of ties which were still almost sacred to them.

When, however, the Congress met on the 2d of July, and the question was again submitted whether it would declare the independence of the colonies, Middleton, Heyward, and Lynch had, under Edward Rutledge's influence, agreed to brave the consequences at home and to vote for the Virginia resolutions in order to preserve unity among the colonies. Fortunately for them an event had taken

place there which had vastly changed the condition of parties and affairs. The war had actually begun, a battle had been fought, a British fleet had been repulsed, a British army held in check, and a victory won in Charlestown harbor, before the news of their action in Congress had been known to these people. On this day, too, a third member had come post from the Delaware counties and turned the vote of that colony in favor of the Declaration. Pennsylvania also changed her vote, and twelve colonies agreed to the Virginia resolutions. The draft of the Declaration was then discussed on the 2d, 3d, and 4th days of July, and on the evening of the last day, the 4th, settled, agreed to in the committee of the whole, and immediately reported and adopted in open Congress. On the 9th of July the convention in New York approved it, and the Declaration of Independence was then agreed to by all the thirteen colonies.

Thus it was, as Ramsay says, that the people of South Carolina without any original design on their part were step by step drawn into revolution and war, which involved them in every species of difficulty and finally dissevered them from the mother country. It so happened that while on the 28th of June John Rutledge was defying the combined army and fleet of his Majesty the King of England in the harbor of Charlestown, Edward Rutledge, now at the head of the delegation in Congress at Philadelphia, was hesitating to commit South Carolina to a declaration of independence. And yet John Rutledge had been for a reconciliation with the Crown; while Edward Rutledge had, from the commencement of the difficulties, inclined to Gadsden's extreme measures rather than to the prudent course of the moderates led by his brother. At the moment when Thomas Jefferson rose in Congress and presented his draft of the Declaration of

Independence, Sir Peter Parker was pouring his broadsides into the little palmetto fort on Sullivan's Island. Was it to await the issue of the battle that then was raging in Charlestown harbor, that some unseen spirit induced the Congress, all unconsciously, to pause and to lay for the time this proposed Declaration of Independence upon the table? This we cannot know; but so it was that, at the very time while Edward Rutledge was signing the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia, John Rutledge was addressing the garrison at Fort Moultrie, thanking them for their gallant conduct, and presenting his own sword to Sergeant Jasper as a reward for his bravery.

It was, however, with grave misgivings that the delegation from South Carolina — not yet informed of the result of the expedition of the British fleet to Charlestown — attached their signatures to that document. But as John Adams clearly saw, a declaration of independence was merely a formal statement of a condition of things which already existed. All impatient himself for such a declaration, he wrote to his wife : —

“As to declarations of independency be patient. Read our privateering laws and commercial laws. What signifies a word? When the thirteen colonies had, by their delegates in Congress, undertaken to regulate commerce; had issued commissions to privateers to prey upon British commerce; had declared that all persons abiding within any of the United colonies owed allegiance to such colony; had enacted that any such who should levy war against the colonies or adhere to the King of Great Britain or other enemies of the colonies, should be deemed guilty of treason against such colony; when they had organized armies and appointed Generals for the avowed purpose of resisting his Majesty's, the King of Great Britain's, forces — they had already exercised the highest rights of Sovereignty, and of free and independent States.”

Nevertheless, such was the strength of the olden ties; and in South Carolina, at least, so strong was the love for

the old country, so great was the pride of being a part of the British dominion, and entitled to the glories of her history, that many shrank from an explicit recognition and declaration of the fact that the colonies were indeed independent States, no longer a part of the old country.

It was with such divided feelings that thousands of the citizens of Charlestown looked on the battle as it raged within full view from the houses on the bay ; their hearts beating with alternate hopes and fears as the fortunes of the day wavered before them. Each broadside of the *Bristol* or the *Experiment* as it shook the little fort told with still greater effect upon their strained nerves as they watched through the rifted clouds of battle smoke to see if the blue flag with " Liberty " upon it still floated in the breeze. The die was indeed cast. Defeat might now not only end in storm and pillage and plunder, but in degrading punishment or ignominious death to their fathers, brothers, and husbands who should survive. Victory, on the other hand, was but the commencement of a long war, the experiment of a form of government which was new and untried, and for which but few were prepared. With these anxious thoughts the people crowded the wharves and sea front of the town, looking on until night had drawn its curtains over the scene, and hid the contending forces. Then they could only look for the flashes through the darkness, and listen to hear the peals like thunder which might be death knells to many friends. So they waited and watched and listened late into the night, until the British fleet gave up the contest. But the battle was over ; and the blue flag with " Liberty " on it still waved the next morning from the sponge staff on the merlon where Jasper had placed it. For some days the crippled fleet lay in the harbor, too much

injured to renew the fight or go to sea. Nor had they yet all disappeared over the bar when came the news that the Declaration of Independence had been adopted in Congress and signed by the delegates from South Carolina.

About ten days after the action a number of the enemy's transports received from Long Island the troops which had found no laurels upon its sandy hills, and at the same time some of the frigates and armed vessels went over the bar. On the 14th of July the *Bristol* made an attempt to cross, but struck. She was got off, however, at length with difficulty but without injury. The transports with the *Solebay*, *Thunder* bombship, *Friendship*, and some of the small vessels sailed on the 21st of July. On the same day a brigantine mounting six four-pounders, and having on board fifty soldiers and six sailors, got aground near Dewees' Inlet and was captured. On the 25th of July the *Experiment* went over the bar and the next morning sailed, and two days after the *Syren* followed. On the 2d of August the *Active*, *Sphinx*, and a large transport went out to sea, leaving South Carolina and its coast once more clear.¹

Though in 1775 the news of the battle of Lexington had reached Charlestown in seventeen days, Wells in the *Gazette* of the 1st of September, 1776, complains that while an express sometimes came through from Philadelphia in sixteen days, the post generally took double that time; and so it was on the 2d of August, the very day when the last of the British fleet went to sea from Charlestown harbor, an express arrived bringing the first news of the Declaration of Independence. But it must be said that the delegates in Congress from South Carolina had not been in any hurry to inform their constituents of their

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 207, 208.

action. Indeed, it was not until the 9th of July that they seem to have found courage to write to President Rutledge upon the subject, and even then as if fearing and reluctant to mention it they begin their communication by saying they enclose certain resolutions of the Congress respecting the provincial forces which they wish may be agreeable to his Excellency, to the Assembly, and to the officers of the army and navy.

“Enclosed also,” they write, “are some of the occasional resolutions and a very important Declaration which the King of Great Britain has at last reduced us to the necessity of making. All the colonies were united upon this great subject except New York, whose delegates were restrained by an instruction given several months ago. Their convention is to meet in a few days, when it expected that instruction will be immediately withdrawn and the Declaration unanimously agreed to by the Thirteen United States of America.”

The letter then continued with other matters of ordinary interest. Thus, parenthetically, was this momentous action on their part announced. Thomas Lynch the elder, who was still in Philadelphia suffering from the paralytic affection with which he had been stricken, as if to countenance and support the action which the young men had taken, joins them in signing this communication, thus lending his weight and influence to secure the approval of their course.¹ Fortunately for its reception, too, the battle of the 28th of June had taken place, and committed many to a line of conduct into which they would not otherwise have entered.

The Declaration of Independence, says Drayton, was received in Charlestown with the greatest joy, and on the 5th of August independency was declared by the civil authority ; the President, accompanied by all the officers,

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 314, 315 ; *Journal of the Congress*.

civil and military, making a grand procession in honor of the event. In the afternoon, in pursuance of general orders, the whole of the troops then in Charlestown, as well continental as provincial, were paraded near the Liberty Tree, where the Declaration was read by Major Barnard Elliott,—the same who had only left the King's Council a little more than a year before,—and an address was made by the Rev. William Percy.¹ But the joy with which the Declaration was received was by no means universal. Mr. Henry Laurens, when a prisoner in the Tower of London, wrote to a friend thus describing his feelings at the time :—

“ When intelligence of that event reached Charlestown where I was, I was called upon to join in a procession for promulgating the Declaration. I happened to be in mourning, and in that garb I attended the solemn and, as I felt it, awful renunciation of an union which I, at the hazard of my life and reputation, most earnestly strove to conserve and support. In truth, I wept that day, as I had done for the melancholy catastrophe which caused me to put on black clothes—the death of a son—and felt much more pain. I thought and openly declared that, in my private opinion, Congress had been too hasty in shutting the door against reconciliation, but I did not know at that moment that Great Britain had first drawn the line of separation by the act of Parliament which threw the resisting colonies out of her protection, and forced them into a state of independence. . . . When I was informed of the line of separation above alluded to, I perceived the ground on which Congress had founded their Declaration, and submitted to the unavoidable act.”²

President Rutledge at once issued a proclamation requiring the Legislative Council and General Assembly to meet at Charlestown on Tuesday, the 17th of September. This body, elected in August, 1775, he now called together to lay before it the Declaration of Independence, which

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 315.

² *Coll. of the Hist. Soc. of So. Ca.*, vol. I, 69, 70.



the delegation from South Carolina had signed with so much hesitation, and communicated with so little exultation.

And now that the Assembly had met, the President appears to have been as reluctant to plunge into the matter about which he had summoned it as the delegates had been in communicating it. He, however, had something more appropriate with which to introduce the subject than the "occasional resolutions" with which the delegates had sent the Declaration. It was but fit and proper that he should congratulate the Assembly on the heroic conduct of the brave men who had repelled the formidable British armament from Charlestown harbor, and he had also to tell them of the signal success of operations against the Cherokees of which we must directly tell.

"Since your last meeting," he then proceeds, "the Continental Congress have declared the United Colonies Free and Independent States, absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and the political connection between them and Great Britain totally dissolved, an event which necessity rendered not only justifiable, but unavoidable. This Declaration and several Resolves of that honorable body received during your recess shall be laid before you. I doubt not you will take such measures as may be requisite in consequence of them."

To this address the Legislative Council answered his Excellency that the Declaration of the Continental Congress called forth all their attention.

"It is an event," they too said, "which necessity had rendered not only justifiable, but absolutely unavoidable. It is a decree now worthy of America. We thankfully receive the notification of and rejoice at it; and we are determined at every hazard to endeavor to maintain it, so that after we have departed our children and their latest posterity may have cause to bless our memory."

The President replied, "Your determination to endeavor to maintain the independence of the United States at every hazard proves that you know the value and are deserving of those rights for which America contends."

The General Assembly were equally explicit in their answer to the President's address.

"It is with unspeakable joy we embrace this opportunity of expressing our satisfaction in the Declaration of the Continental Congress constituting the United Colonies free and independent States absolved from their subjection to George III and totally dissolving all political union between them and Great Britain. An event unsought for, and now produced by unavoidable necessity, and which every friend to justice and humanity must not only hold justifiable as the natural effect of unwonted persecution, but equally rejoice in as the only security against injuries and oppressions, and the most promising source of future liberty and safety."

To the Assembly the President replied, "May the happiest consequences be derived to the United States from the independence of America, who could not obtain even peace, liberty, and safety by any other means."¹

It is difficult to reconcile these utterances of President Rutledge with his views expressed both before and after the meeting of the Assembly. Upon adjourning the General Assembly, which as a Congress had adopted the Constitution, he had charged the members to tell their constituents that the Constitution they had adopted was but temporary, only intended to provide some form of government during the interregnum, until an accommodation could be obtained with Great Britain; but now he not only accepts the Declaration of Independence as necessary and unavoidable, but applauds the determination of the Council to maintain it at every hazard; and to the General Assembly he predicts the happiest consequences to be derived from it. And yet when, as we shall

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 376, 382.

see, two years afterward, the General Assembly passed a bill reciting that the Constitution of 1776 was temporary only and suited to the situation of public affairs when it was resolved on, looking forward to an accommodation with Great Britain, an event then desired, but that the united colonies had since been constituted independent States by the declaration of Congress and it therefore became necessary to frame a constitution suited to that great event, President Rutledge exercising the power conferred by the Constitution of 1776 vetoed the bill, declaring that he still looked forward to such an accommodation as desirable then in 1778 as it had been in 1776.

Ramsay says the Declaration of Independence arrived in Charlestown at a most favorable juncture. It found the people of South Carolina exasperated against Great Britain for her late hostile attack and elevated with their successful defence of Fort Moultrie. It was welcomed by a great majority of the inhabitants. In private it is probable, he says, that some condemned the measure as rashly adventurous beyond the ability of the State, but that these private murmurs never produced to the public eye a single expression of disapprobation. It was not likely that those who for the last two years could not express their opinions without danger of being tarred and feathered, would have been open at this time to declare their doubts as to the wisdom of those who were conducting the Revolution. But none the less was there opposition to this severance of the ties which bound this province to the mother country deep in the hearts and minds of many of the best and most patriotic of the people of South Carolina. John Rutledge himself was no doubt carried away for the time by the natural elation of sentiment upon the victory of Fort Moultrie which he had done so much to secure — which, indeed, would not have been won had it

not been for his firmness and determination. But he was carried away only for the time. True, as we shall see, he assented to an act requiring an oath of abjuration of the King and allegiance to the State; but when an attempt was made to form a permanent constitution, the necessity of accommodation with Great Britain again forced itself upon his conviction, and he refused to close the doors to a reconciliation.

Miles Brewton who, as we have seen, had entertained Josiah Quincy on his visit to Charlestown in 1773, as also Lord William Campbell on his arrival in the province in 1775, and had then endeavored to keep the peace between the Royal Governor and the Provincial Congress of which he was a member; who had been a member of the Council of Safety and active participant in the early movements for redress against the grievances of the colonists, was typical of many in South Carolina. In a letter to Quincy in 1774 upon the situation in Charlestown, he writes: "I have quitted trade and am now winding up my labors for twenty-one years past. I long for shelter; when once I get under the shade it is not a little will bring me out again." But there was no shade or rest in Carolina in those times. He had hoped, as he then wrote to his friend Quincy, that if Boston would but persevere and be prudent, her sisters and neighbors would work out her salvation without taking the musket. But things had gone very differently since then. War had actually begun, and the moving party in the colonies had given up the hope, if, indeed, they entertained any longer the wish for a redress of grievances from Parliament; they were now resolved on their separation from Great Britain. To this extent he would not go, nor would he remain to be other than a subject of Great Britain. So gathering up all his movable effects, he left his mansion in which he had

exercised so generous and brilliant a hospitality, and with all his family sailed away from the province. No tidings were ever received of the ship in which they sailed, and now in the *Gazette* which publishes the Declaration of Independence, Charles Pinckney and Jacob Motte advertise that they had proved his will, and as executors had assumed control of his great estate.

Miles Brewton had left the province, but there were many who remained who thought as he did. Indeed, there were few families in South Carolina, as we have had occasion before to observe, which were not divided upon the question of independence.¹ When four years afterwards Charlestown was taken, two hundred citizens, styling themselves "the principal and most respectable inhabitants" of the town, addressed Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot, congratulating them upon their success and declaring that although the right of taxing America in Parliament had excited considerable ferment in the minds of the people of the province, yet it might, with a religious adherence to truth, be affirmed that they had not entertained the most distant thought of dissolving the union that had so happily subsisted between them and their parent country, and that when in the progress of the fatal controversy the doctrine of independence which originated in the Northern colonies made its appearance among them, their natures revolted at the idea.² There are some, but few, names among the signers of this paper which can now be recognized under the description they assumed as those of "principal and most respectable inhabitants," but what they said was undoubtedly true not only of themselves but of many others who did not sign that

¹ *So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 557.

² *Siege of Charlestown* (J. Munsell, Limited Edition), 148 ; extracts from Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, June 21, 1780.

paper. In the *Royal Gazette*, into which Robert Wells's *South Carolina and American General Gazette* was converted during the occupancy of Charlestown by the British troops, in the issues of July 1 and September 19, 1780, there are published two long lists of citizens who had not addressed Sir Henry Clinton, but who had memorialized the commandant of Charlestown, declaring their allegiance and attachment to the person and government of his Majesty, and praying an opportunity of evincing the sincerity of their profession. Their petition, it is declared, had been referred to gentlemen of known loyalty and integrity, as well as knowledge of the persons and character of the inhabitants who had reported confirming the truth of the declarations of these petitioners. In these lists are found the names of citizens of the highest character, some of whom had taken part in the first movements in the province. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of many of these, either in their resistance to what they regarded the wrongs and oppressions of the colonies in the first instance, or in their declaration of their allegiance to the King in the second. Their conduct was consistent; they were for resistance to the invasion of the rights of the colonies; but this resistance was to be made within the dominion of Great Britain. They were opposed to the Declaration of Independence and a separation from the mother country. To this first secession the people of South Carolina were, as a whole, most bitterly opposed.



CHAPTER IX

1776

WHILE these things were taking place on the coast, the whole western frontier of the province was again ablaze. The Indians were upon the warpath. When we would realize what our forefathers dared in resisting the imposition of a few pennies of taxes because they regarded the measure theoretically unconstitutional, let us recall the horrors of Indian warfare, — the tomahawk, the scalping knife, the torture, the conflagration which invariably accompanied an Indian uprising. Let us recollect that it was not only the prowess and valor of the naval and military force of Great Britain which were challenged on the coast, but far more the terrors of the savage lurking in their rear. Let us recollect, too, the defenceless condition of the people in the back country upon whom these horrors would fall, when the Indians learned of the war between the whites, and were instigated to hostilities by emissaries sent to incite them to murder and pillage. To those who had witnessed and escaped the massacre at Long Canes but a few years before, the dread must have been all but overpowering. Remembering this, we must wonder that there were so many in that region who would risk so much in a cause in which they were not materially interested, rather than condemn the conduct of those who hesitated to arouse their savage neighbors, supported as the savages would be by the British government. It was the crime of Great Britain in this contest that she instigated sav-

ages to war upon her own people, and accepted them as her allies.

Captain John Stuart was at this time Superintendent of his Majesty's Indian affairs for the whole southern district including Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He had, as we have seen, the warmest friends among the Cherokees, was beloved by them, and possessed the greatest influence among all their tribes. He was intensely loyal to the King. In June, 1775, he left his mansion in Charlestown and retired to Florida. Apprehending that from that point he would be stirring up the Indians, the Provincial Congress had made an order restraining his wife and Mrs. Fenwick his daughter from absenting themselves from his home in the town, thus holding them as hostages for his good behavior. A guard was placed around the house, and it was ordered that no person should be allowed to visit Mrs. Stuart without Colonel Moultrie's order. From this restriction Mrs. Fenwick was subsequently released, and Mrs. Stuart succeeded in escaping through the assistance, as it was supposed, of her son-in-law, Mr. Fenwick, who was himself accordingly arrested and put in jail.¹

From Florida Stuart succeeded in opening communication at once with the Cherokees, who still inhabited the northwestern part of South Carolina, and with General Gage at Boston. In the first instance Stuart employed Alexander Cameron, his Indian agent among the Cherokees, and his brother Henry Stuart, and in the latter our old acquaintance Moses Kirkland, who when Mr. Drayton refused to receive his surrender had escaped to the sloop of war *Tamar* then in Charlestown harbor. On the 3d of October, 1775, Stuart reported to General Gage that as a great majority of the frontier and back country inhabitants

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 122, 123.

of Carolina were attached to and inclined to support the government, that he was opposed to an *indiscriminate attack by Indians*, but he would "dispose of them to join in executing any concerted plan, and to act with and assist their well-disposed neighbors." Stuart dispatched this letter by Moses Kirkland, who he wrote would assure General Gage as to the favorable disposition of the people in the back country.¹ The vessel in which Kirkland sailed was providentially captured, and the letters found in his possession were published by order of the Continental Congress, to show the Americans that the British government had employed savages who indiscriminately murdered men, women, and children. The capture of the vessel and Kirkland, who was to have had an active share in the Indian operations, for the time frustrated them; but they were renewed, and the Cherokees began a massacre just at the time the British fleet attacked the fort on Sullivan's Island.²

When Cameron was first appointed agent by the British government for the Cherokees, he had opened two extensive farms on the frontier of Carolina, which he stocked with negroes, horses, and cattle; and to secure his influence among the Indians, regardless of morality or propriety, after the custom of Indian agents, had selected an Indian woman from one of the most influential families of the Cherokees, whom he took to his house as his mistress and placed at the head of his table. Her dress was of the richest kind the country could afford, her furniture was elegant, and her mode of living sumptuous. To increase his influence, through the means of his mistress, royal presents were distributed among the Indians under her immediate direction. When he saw the storm

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 296, 297.

² Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. I, 155, 156.

gathering, Cameron removed into the Cherokee nation, where he was constantly surrounded by his red brethren. He was there a powerful assistant to Stuart in his designs.

The Council of Safety had sent Captain William Freeman to meet some of the chiefs and head men of the Cherokees at Seneca on the frontier to assure them of the friendly disposition of the white people toward the Indians, and to draw assurances from them of reciprocal sentiments; but upon his return he reported that the Indians could not be relied upon while they were under the baleful influence of Cameron. It was thereupon determined to secure Cameron's person and to bring him out of the nation. This hazardous enterprise through Major Williamson was intrusted to Captain James McCall, whom we have seen with a company at Ninety-Six, and who was now beginning a brilliant career, which unfortunately was not to outlast the revolutionary struggle. With Captain McCall were associated Captain James Baskin and Ensign Patrick Calhoun. Their party consisted of twenty-two volunteers from Carolina and eleven from Georgia. The avowed object of the party was to demand restoration of property plundered by Loyalists and Indians. This they were to ask, however, in a friendly way. The detachment rendezvoused at the Cherokee Ford on the Savannah River on the 20th of June, 1776, and marched for the Cherokee nation. Every preparation was made for a rapid retreat in case they were opposed by a superior force. The orders to the commander, Captain McCall, were to proceed to a certain point before he broke the seal of his private instructions or disclosed the real object of the expedition to the men who composed the detachment; but finding there was no disposition to shrink from the undertaking, the purpose was confided to the men individually. The party passed through several Indian

towns, where they were met and received with every appearance of friendship and hospitality and a profession of readiness to comply with the requisitions made of them. On the evening of the 26th they encamped in the vicinity of a large town, where McCall made known his wishes to have a discussion with the chiefs upon the subject of his mission. The conference was spun out, when suddenly his interpreter and himself were rushed upon by a party of warriors and made prisoners. The detachment under Basken and Calhoun were at the same moment surrounded by several hundred Indians, who drove in the sentries and fell upon the camp while the men were almost all asleep. The precautions which Captain McCall had ordered had not been strictly regarded. The Indians rushed into the camp with guns, knives, and hatchets, and for a few moments a bloody conflict ensued. Ensign Calhoun was wounded in the first onset. The detachment, though overpowered by numbers and taken by surprise, succeeded in cutting their way through the ranks of the savages. Calhoun and three others were killed. After almost incredible sufferings from fatigue and hunger the remainder of the detachment reached the settlement in parties of three or four together within two weeks after the defeat.

Captain McCall remained a prisoner for several weeks, and to impress him with some idea of the dreadful fate which awaited him he was frequently taken to the place of execution to witness the torture under which his fellow-prisoners expired. One instance is mentioned in his journal of a boy about twelve years of age who was put to death in a similar manner as had been John Lawson, the explorer, who perished under torture in 1711.¹ The details are horrible. Light wood splinters were prepared of

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Prop. Gov. (McCrary)*, 497.

eighteen inches in length, sharpened at one end and fractured at the other, so that when lighted the torch would not be extinguished by being thrown. After these weapons of death had been prepared and a fire made for the purpose of lighting them, the youth was suspended naked by the arms between two posts three feet from the ground. Then the scene of horror began. It was deemed a mark of dexterity, and accompanied by shouts of applause, when an Indian threw one of these torches so as to stick the sharp end into the body of the suffering victim, without extinguishing the torch. Thus were two of the most cruel modes of death united in one,—crucifixion and burning,—and to these was added the exquisite suffering from the piercing splinters. This torture was continued in this instance for two hours before the poor boy was relieved by death.

The alarm excited among the Indians by the successful operation of the American forces of which we must presently further tell relieved to some extent the rigors of McCall's imprisonment, and of this he availed himself by taking every opportunity of impressing on the minds of the Indians the consequences of murdering a man who visited their towns for the purpose of friendly talks and smoking the pipe of peace; he warned them that if he was murdered his countrymen would require much Indian blood to atone for his life. Councils were held to condemn him to death, and in one instance he was saved by a single voice. Efforts were made by Cameron through the medium of an Indian woman to obtain a personal interview with him, but McCall peremptorily refused seeing or having any communication with Cameron. Finally McCall effected his escape, and with one pint of parched and a few ears of green corn, he traversed the mountains for three hundred miles on horseback without a saddle,

and the ninth day after his escape reached the frontier of Virginia, where he fell in with a body of Virginian troops under the command of Colonel Christie on its way to join the forces of North and South Carolina in an expedition to put an end to Cherokee invasions. But other and no less thrilling events had taken place in South Carolina during his, McCall's, captivity.¹

Stuart and Cameron had succeeded in arranging with the Cherokees for an attack on the frontier settlement from Georgia to Virginia as a diversion in favor of the invasion by the British fleet and army on the coast. The Indian uprising was to be made as soon as the fleet and army should be ready to strike. Learning therefore on the 1st of July that the fleet had arrived off Charleston harbor, the Cherokees took up the war club and with the dawn of that day poured down upon the frontiers of South Carolina, massacring without distinction of age or sex all persons who fell in their power. On this day one of Captain Aaron Smith's sons arrived at the residence of Mr. Francis Salvador on Corn-acre Creek in Ninety-Six district with two of his fingers shot away. He told that his father's house on Little River had been attacked by the savages, and that his father, mother, and five children, together with five negro men, had been butchered by them. Mr. Salvador, who was a member of the Provincial Congress and one of the few from the Up Country who had taken an active part in its proceedings, forthwith mounted his horse and galloped to Major Andrew Williamson's residence, twenty-eight miles from thence, where he found another of Captain Smith's sons who had fortunately escaped. Other families were likewise massacred, among

¹ In this account we have followed McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, vol. I 76-81, which purports to be taken from a journal of Captain McCall' but of which we have no other information.

them the Hamptons. Anthony Hampton, the father of General Wade Hampton, was among the first emigrants from Virginia to the upper part of South Carolina. He had settled with his family on Tyger River in what is now Spartanburg County. Impressed with the importance to the frontier inhabitants that the Cherokees should be conciliated and kept in peace, Edward, Henry, and Richard Hampton, sons of Anthony, each of whom afterwards distinguished himself during the Revolution, had been sent by their neighbors to invite the Indians to a talk ; but the British emissaries had unfortunately been before them, and had already arranged for the uprising which now took place. In the absence of his sons the Indians fell upon Mr. Hampton and his family, killed him, his wife, his son Preston, his infant grandson Harrison, and burnt his house. Mrs. Harrison with her daughter and her husband were absent at a neighbor's, but returned in the midst of the conflagration. They were in great danger, but escaped. Edward, Henry, Richard, John, and Wade Hampton, who were then absent, were preserved to avenge the family ; so, too, was James Harrison, the son-in-law.

This outbreak of the Indians caused the greatest consternation. The people were almost destitute of arms, having sold the best of their rifles to arm the rifle regiments and Rangers in the service. They were also in great want of ammunition. Nor would the men collect in bodies until they had disposed their families in places of comparative safety. Some fled as far as Orangeburgh. The country was desolated, — plantations abandoned, and crops left to go to ruin, as the people crowded into the little stockade forts. Several hundred men, women, and children of the helpless inhabitants of the frontier fell a sacrifice to the tomahawk and scalping knife.

Major Williamson, to whom the first news of the uprising was brought, lost no time in opposing the invasion; but so great was the panic that although he dispatched expresses on all sides, only forty men were collected in two days. But with this little band, accompanied by Mr. Salvador, he marched on the 3d of July to the house in which Captain Smith had been killed. On the next day forty more of the militia arrived. On the 5th he mustered 110 men, and on the 8th his force was increased to 222, when he encamped at Holmes's field on Hogskin Creek, about four miles from the Cherokee line at De Witt's Corner, now Due West. Here he remained until the 16th of July, when, having collected 450 men, he advanced to Baker's Creek at a point a few miles above Moffettsville, in what is now Abbeville County.

The inhabitants along the Saluda had taken refuge in an old fort called Lyndley's, near Rayborn Creek, where on the morning of the 15th of July they were attacked by 88 Indians and 102 white men, many of whom were painted and disguised as Indians. The Indians expected to have surprised the fort, and commenced the attack about one o'clock in the morning. Fortunately 150 men under Major Downes had arrived the evening before on their way to join Major Williamson, and with their assistance the attack was repulsed with a loss to the Indians of two of their chief warriors, and several were left dead upon the field. The garrison immediately pursued and took 13 white men prisoners, among them some painted and dressed as Indians. These were sent to Ninety-Six for safe-keeping; it would have been better to have hanged them at once. Had this attack upon Fort Lyndley succeeded, it is probable that all the disaffected would at once have joined the Indians. It was against the people of this region that Colonel Richardson's expedition

had been directed; and it was no doubt expected that the malcontents with whom Stuart and Cameron had been intriguing would rise and join them in the royal cause. This repulse, however, awed all the wavering, and many of the whites who had joined the Indians surrendered themselves. The news of the victory of the 28th of June arriving immediately after this affair, the designs of the disaffected were crushed, and the friends of the American cause were enabled to join Major Williamson in his march upon the Cherokees.

On hearing of the outbreak of the Indians, President Rutledge had sent Captain Felix Warley of the Third Regiment with a detachment of a hundred rangers as a convoy of wagons with arms, ammunition, and stores to Major Williamson, with orders to march against the Cherokees. Captain Warley, with his loaded convoy, marched from Charlestown to De Witt's Corner by the road along the Congaree in fourteen days. The news of the victory of the 28th of June reached Williamson on the 22d of July. Having been reënforced by Colonel Jack's regiment from Georgia and others to the number of about 1150 men, and learning that Alexander Cameron, Stuart's deputy, had arrived a few days before from the over-hill settlements with thirteen white men, and that he was encamped at Oconore Creek about thirty miles distant, with some white men and the Essenecca Indians from the Keowee River, Williamson determined to attack the camp at once before they could learn of his advance. Accordingly, about six o'clock in the evening of the 31st of July, taking with him two prisoners as guides, under threats of instant death in case of misbehavior, he put himself in motion with a detachment of 330 men on horseback, hoping to surprise the enemy by daybreak. The river Keowee running between Williamson's forces and Cameron's

party, and being only fordable at Essenecca, Williamson was obliged, though much against his inclination, to take the road to that ford. Unfortunately he proceeded without scouts or guard sufficiently advanced to be of any service in warning his main body of danger. He was ambushed about two o'clock on the morning of the 1st of August in Essenecca town. The Indians, suffering the guides and advanced guard to pass, poured a heavy fire into the Williamson men, and they were thrown into confusion. Major Williamson's horse was shot under him; Mr. Francis Salvador, who had brought to Williamson the first news of the Indian uprising, was shot down by his side, and unfortunately immediately discovered by the Indians. He was scalped alive before he was found by his friends in the dark. What added to this misfortune was that after the action it appeared that Captain Smith, son of the Captain Aaron Smith who had been murdered with his family, saw the Indians while in the act of taking off the scalp; but supposing it was Mr. Salvador's servant assisting his master, did not interfere to save his friend. Mr. Salvador died without being sensible of the savage cruelty which had been inflicted upon him.¹

Major Williamson's forces, completely surprised, broke away and fled in the greatest confusion. The enemy kept up a constant fire, which the retreating militia returned at random as dangerous to their friends who were willing to advance against the enemy as it was to the enemy themselves. Fortunately Lieutenant Colonel Hammond rallied a party of about twenty men, and, making an unexpected charge, repulsed the savage foe and escaped. The Indians lost but one man killed and three wounded; of Major Williamson's party three died from their wounds and fourteen

¹ For an interesting sketch of this gentleman, see *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 247, 248.

were badly injured. When daylight arrived he burnt that part of Essenecca town which was on the eastern side of the Keowee River, and later Colonel Hammond crossed the river, burnt that on the western side as well, and destroyed all the provisions, computed at six thousand bushels of Indian corn, besides peas and other articles. The object of overtaking Cameron and his associates having been thus defeated, Williamson retreated and joined his camp at Twenty-three Mile Creek, where he expected to form a junction with detachments of Colonel Neel's and Colonel Thomas's regiments of militia.

There was considerable jealousy of Williamson's command; he was but a major in the militia line, but President Rutledge had given him the appointment of commander-in-chief of the expedition, which entitled him to command others though colonels. To put an end to the question of rank he was about this time appointed colonel of the Ninety-Six regiment. Colonel Williamson resumed the offensive on the 2d of August, and on the 8th with 640 chosen men he marched to attack the Indian camp at Oconore; finding it deserted, he destroyed two towns, Ostatoy and Tugaloo. He continued to advance until the 12th, when, coming up with a large body of Indians, he attacked and defeated them. They fled, leaving 16 of their men dead in space of 150 yards; Williamson losing 6 killed and 17 wounded. In this expedition he destroyed the Indian towns of Tomassy, Chelohsee, and Eustash. All corn on this side of the middle settlements was destroyed, and the Indians were driven to support themselves on roots, berries, and wild fruit.

On Colonel Williamson's return to his camp he found that numbers of his men had gone home, forced to do so from fatigue, want of clothes, and other necessities, and that many who had remained were in equal distress. He

was obliged therefore to grant furloughs ordering them to rejoin him at Essenecca on the 28th, to which place he marched on the 16th with about six hundred men. Here he erected a fort, which in honor of the President he called Fort Rutledge.

Upon the breaking out of this war application had been made to North Carolina and Virginia to coöperate with the forces of South Carolina in this region. Each of these States complied and raised a body of troops. The first under General Rutherford, to act in conjunction with the South Carolinians on this side of the mountains, and the other under Colonel Christie, to act against the over-hill Cherokees. But Colonel Williamson had destroyed all the lower settlements before the North Carolinians under General Rutherford took the field.

Colonel Williamson now having increased his force to 2300 men, broke up the camp at Essenecca; leaving 300 men as a guard to the inhabitants and as a garrison to Fort Rutledge, he marched with about 2000 men to coöperate with General Rutherford. A campaign ensued in which all the lower towns, middle settlements, and settlements in the valleys eastward of the Unacaye and Appalachian mountains were destroyed. In less than three months, that is, from the 15th of July to the 11th of October, 1776, the Cherokees were so far subdued as to be incapable of renewing hostilities. The whole loss of the Carolinians in killed and wounded was 99. The Cherokees lost about 2000. The natural difficulties of the country through which the campaign was made, over pathless mountains, through dark thickets, rugged paths, and narrow defiles, called forth a patience in suffering and exertion in overcoming difficulties which would have done honor to veteran troops. None of all the expeditions before undertaken against the savages

had been so successful as this first effort of the new-born Commonwealth.

The unfortunate and misled Indians, attacked on all sides, — from the north by the Virginians and North Carolinians, from the east by the South Carolinians, and from the south by the Georgians, — sued in the most abject terms for peace. A conference took place, at which commissioners from Georgia also attended and concurred in and signed a treaty of pacification. By this treaty the Indians ceded a large part of their lands to the State of South Carolina. This tract includes the present counties of Anderson, Pickens, Oconee, and Greenville.

The double success in Carolina in 1776 was in marked contrast to the disasters at the North. The failure of the invasion of Canada, the loss of the battle of Long Island with Washington's perilous retreat, and the abandonment of New York had greatly disheartened the Americans. It was from South Carolina that there came the first encouragement of a substantial victory over a combined British fleet and army, and still more of a decisive campaign against their Indian allies of the interior who had been brought into the field to coöperate with the British force on the coast. The Indian uprising was no doubt most injurious to his Majesty's cause in Carolina. The fact that those savages had been instigated by the agents of the Royal government to rise upon the people of the frontier and indiscriminately to massacre the King's friends as well as his enemies, roused great indignation and resentment, and turned many a supporter of the Royal cause to the new government. But a great mistake was made on the part of the friends of the latter which to some extent neutralized the result. Robert Cunningham, who had been arrested by Major Williamson and confined in Charlestown by the order of the Congress since the 30th

of September, 1775, because he had not considered himself bound by the treaty of Ninety-Six, had been detained there in a manner, however, suitable to his standing among his own people at the public expense. He had been treated kindly, but had not been allowed to receive visits except occasionally from gentlemen well disposed to the American cause. These took every opportunity of softening his antipathies and of persuading him to abandon the opposition in which he had been engaged. In this they had so far prevailed that in February Robert Cuninghame petitioned the Provincial Congress for leave to occupy here a position of neutrality; but this the Congress declined, and he had remained in confinement. It was now supposed that as the British invasion had been completely frustrated and the stability of the government fairly demonstrated, a generous policy toward Cuninghame and other prisoners from the upper country who were in confinement with him might produce happy results. For this reason they were all released from custody and returned to their homes and friends. But so far from helping the American cause this wise act on the part of the President and his Council was resented by the friends of the new government in Ninety-Six and that neighborhood. Some looked upon it as turning their enemies loose upon them at the very time they were being assailed by the Indians. Others regarded it a dangerous exercise of power by the President and Council, and contrary to the determination of the Provincial Congress. To such an extent did this dissatisfaction extend that when Cuninghame in good faith presented himself at Williamson's headquarters, declaring himself a friend and that he had come to join the expedition against the Cherokees, a mutiny was threatened in Williamson's camp, which was only suppressed by Williamson's advice to Cuninghame to return home and attend to his own busi-

ness. Thus repulsed by the supporters of the American cause Cuninghame remained peaceably at home until the fall of Charlestown in 1780, when he was made a brigadier in the British provincial forces and placed in command of a garrison. Had President Rutledge's policy prevailed, Cuninghame and many of his friends and their great influence might have been secured to a hearty support of the Whig cause.

The year 1776, glorious as it was to the American cause in the South, did not however close with unalloyed success and satisfaction. General Lee, who was now assuming all the glory of the battle of the 28th of June, and ready for anything that might add to his fame, allowed himself to be persuaded to undertake an expedition to Florida, which was to be no more successful than Oglethorpe's in 1740, and was to end even more disastrously, and this though without even a battle fought or a soldier wounded.

The Loyalists who fled from the Carolinas and Georgia found a secure retreat in East Florida, from which the settlers of southern Georgia were frequently disturbed by the predatory incursions of banditti organized into a regiment which bore the name of Florida Rangers and of which Thomas Browne was now the Colonel and Daniel McGirth Lieutenant Colonel. Of Thomas Browne and of his ignominious and cruel treatment by the Whigs of Georgia we have already spoken. Daniel McGirth, who was henceforth to be known for his violence and cruelty, had alas! also, if tradition is to be believed, great wrongs of his own to avenge.¹

¹ Dr. Johnson in his *Traditions*, 172, gives a most interesting story of Daniel McGirth, and of his cruel and outrageous treatment by American officers in Georgia, — his public whipping upon a trumped-up charge, made for the purpose of having him dismissed from the army in order that an officer might secure a valuable horse which McGirth owned.

Mr. Jonathan Bryan, a gentleman of the highest character and position in Savannah, and one of the most active patriots of Georgia, coming to Charlestown soon after the victory over the British fleet on the 28th of June, persuaded General Lee that there was glory and plunder in an expedition to break up this Tory band and to penetrate to St. Augustine. Without consulting any one, General Lee the next morning paraded the Virginia and North Carolina continentals, and commending them for their services, called upon them to volunteer for a secret expedition he had planned as a means of rewarding them; he told them that the service was without danger and certain of success, and that a large booty would be obtained of which he offered to resign his share to them. General Lee's affected secrecy deceived no one. It was well known that the proposed expedition was to Florida, which, like Oglethorpe's, was considered ill advised at that season of the year. His appeal, too, to the troops was disapproved and condemned by the people of South Carolina as holding up to the soldiery booty, rather than liberty, as the purpose for which they had taken up arms. But General Lee was determined upon the expedition, and having persuaded the Virginia and North Carolina troops to volunteer, he applied to President Rutledge for the aid of his troops and ammunition, the troops of South Carolina not yet having been placed on the continental line, and consequently not under his orders. A detachment of two hundred and sixty was thereupon drawn from the South Carolina regiments to accompany him.

McGirth, it is said, was of the highly respected family of that name in Camden, and related to the best families there. We have not been able to ascertain whether he was the son of Colonel McGirth of that place, mentioned in a former volume [*Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady) 638], and also as a militia officer in 1775.

At this most unhealthy season of the year, midsummer, Lee marched off this body without supplies or necessities, without a field-piece or a medicine chest. General Howe, who had recently come into the province, followed with Colonel Moultrie soon after. On Colonel Moultrie's arrival at Savannah Lee proposed to him to take command of an expedition against St. Augustine, inquiring whether the fact that his brother, Dr. John Moultrie, being at St. Augustine as the Royal Lieutenant Governor of Florida, would be an objection to his doing so. Colonel Moultrie declared that that circumstance would not deter him, but that, if he undertook it, he must have eight hundred men and the necessities for such a movement. Lee sent for the articles required by Moultrie, and they were preparing for the march when an express arrived from the Continental Congress calling Lee to Philadelphia. Lee left Savannah two days after, ordering the Virginia and North Carolina troops to follow him, leaving the South Carolina detachment to sicken and die in the swamps of the Ogechee. The expedition was at an end. The troops had neither met nor had they even seen an enemy, but they had suffered more than if they had endured a bloody campaign. The sickness and mortality from the climate at this season were worse than battle. At Sunbury, the advanced position reached, fourteen or fifteen men were buried every day. There was scarce an officer of the South Carolina detachment who was not dangerously ill. General Lee arrived in Charlestown on the 8th of September, where he was prevailed upon to leave the North Carolina continentals in South Carolina, as the South Carolina troops had been left in Georgia.¹ He hurried on to join Washington in the Jerseys, where he was hailed as the deliverer of the South. He encouraged the contrast

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 184-187.

between his successes there and Washington's defeat on Long Island. He was, in fact, the military idol of the day, members of Washington's immediate family joining in their homage to him, to the disparagement of their own chief. Fortunately for the colonies, he was captured at an outpost by the enemy, through his own negligence and disobedience of Washington's orders, before the year was at an end, if, indeed, his capture was not a part of his treachery.

On the 17th of September, 1776, the Continental Congress appointed Colonel Christopher Gadsden and Colonel William Moultrie Brigadier Generals, whereupon Lieutenant Colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney became Colonel, Major William Cattell, Lieutenant Colonel, and Captain Adam McDonald Major of the First Regiment of Infantry; and Lieutenant Colonel Isaac Motte Colonel, Major Francis Marion Lieutenant Colonel, and Captain Peter Horry Major of the Second Regiment. On the 20th of the same month the General Assembly turned over the six regular regiments, to wit, the First and Second Regiments of Infantry, the regiment of Rangers, the regiment of artillery, and the two regiments of rifle men, to the continental establishment.¹

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 337, 383; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 187.

CHAPTER X

1777-78

THE history of South Carolina from this time forth is *that* of the State. The Royal province was now entirely at an end. The last Royal Governor, Lord William Campbell, had sailed away, mortally wounded in his final attempt to reestablish his government; and as the sails of the vessel which bore him disappeared over the horizon, there had come the news of the Declaration of Independence. There were to follow years of as bloody a civil war as ever stained the history of a people. But through it and from it all was to come the State of South Carolina, the undivided sovereignty of which was to be the cornerstone of the faith of all its people. From English and Huguenot, from Scotch and Irish and Welsh, from German and Swiss, and from Whig and Tory, whose hands were now to be dyed in each other's blood, was to come a people of marked characteristics, and to the rest of the world of a peculiarly homogeneous character, but whose distinguishing trait was to be their fealty and devotion to their State.

The ball of revolution which had been started was now kept going, and given a direction not at all to the wishes of many who had helped to put it in motion. We have pointed out the anomalous fact in the history of the Revolution in South Carolina that all of its leaders were churchmen, and that the dissenters took no conspicuous part in the movement. The leaders of the Revolution in South Carolina, with the exception of Gadsden, perhaps,

were cavaliers in heart—they were devoted to the throne and to the church. The ministry of George the Third had repulsed them, and they had at last broken with the King, and had, many of them, in sorrow and in tears acquiesced in the Declaration of Independence; but the church remained; and when they would fast and pray for God's guidance and protection in this new government they had set up and were trying to establish, it was still to the old St. Philip's they would wend their way and with the old ritual—to them a necessary part of any State ceremonial—that they would offer their supplications. The Constitution of 1776, while it had discarded the King, had not meddled with the church. But now the "White Meetners"—the Congregationalists under the lead of the Rev. William Tennent, a Presbyterian clergyman, a native of New Jersey who had recently come from a Congregational church in Connecticut, whom the Council of Safety had sent on the mission to the upper part of the State with William Henry Drayton in 1775—had begun to clamor for its disestablishment. This was, no doubt, the necessary logical result of the Revolution the churchmen had inaugurated. Nay, they themselves had rendered it inevitable; for had they not, for the purpose of winning over to their cause against the King, the Presbyterians of the upper country, sent Mr. Tennent on that mission? And could they have expected the Presbyterians to go into the Revolution and consent to allow them to retain their church establishment? Did they not understand that an established church and a republic were inconsistent? Perhaps now they realized this, but it was none the less a bitter truth to admit.

Mr. Tennent began the agitation of the question whether there was to be any religious establishment of one denomi-

nation of Christians over another under the new order of things. He wrote a memorial upon the subject, which was printed and scattered broadcast throughout the province, especially in the upper country. A copy of this memorial was sent to Colonel William Hill in the New Acquisition, — now York County, — the same Colonel Hill whom we shall see distinguishing himself as an officer under Sumter ; and in a manuscript memoir of the times Colonel Hill tells that he procured the signature to it of as many names as possible ; indeed, he says he induced the women to sign their names as well as the men, as he did not believe that women have no souls. The memorial, he writes, was at first regarded as a novelty and matter of surprise ; but that when the principles were properly examined they were found to be true. Many thousand signatures were thus obtained, and the matter was prepared and ready for the General Assembly when it should meet.¹

The new General Assembly met in December, 1776, and following the custom of the Royal Governors, President John Rutledge made the body a speech in opening the session. It was with great satisfaction, he declared, he met so full a representation of the free and independent State elected under a constitution, many benefits of which had already been generally diffused. He recommended measures for supporting the authority of the government, — sustaining its credit, preserving the peace of the State, and rendering the militia a more effectual defence against the enemy ; and then after minor matters he concluded : —

“The most remote districts being now immediately represented by persons chosen therein, the exercise of which right could not be obtained from royal justice or

¹ *Hist. Presbyterian Church in So. Ca.* (Howe), vol. I, 370.

favor (though often solicited, the want of it having been severely felt), their local and particular grievances may be disclosed by their respective members." Hugh Rutledge, brother of the President, was chosen Speaker of the Legislative Council, and in their behalf he returns thanks to his Excellency for his speech and congratulates him on his being elected to the honorable station of presiding over the State. John Mathews, Speaker of the General Assembly, also congratulates the President on the first meeting of a legislature chosen by a free people under a happy and virtuous constitution. Mr. Speaker Mathews also alludes to the fact that the remote districts were now immediately represented in the legislative body of the State—a privilege, he said, hitherto cruelly withheld by the unrelenting tyranny of the King's government.

These remote districts, however, and indeed the parishes as well, were but in a few instances represented by persons who could claim the authority of a general popular election. We shall see Rawlins Lowndes, when President in a few months after, declaring that members were often returned to the House by two or three of the inhabitants, sometimes indeed with no vote at all but that of the returning officer; and Colonel Hill gives us a like account of the election of members in the New Acquisition. He says the citizens there met and sent five men; but that these were not chosen by ballot, but were named by such as pleased to do so. There was dissatisfaction with the action of this caucus, for it was probably nothing more, and he tells us that a short time after the Representatives so chosen had gone to Charlestown and taken their seats, some citizens came to him at his Iron Works and complained of the manner in which those who had gone had been chosen. Whereupon a Dutchman who had lately come from Pennsylvania advised him to convene the citi-

zens on a certain day and elect by ballot. This, he says, was done, and the second set elected were allowed their seats with the other five. This will account, he says, for the fact that the New Acquisition had ten members for a number of years when the three other districts between the Broad and Catawba had together only the same number.¹ Colonel Hill when he wrote this in 1815 had certainly forgotten something of the constitutional history of the State, but his account of this election is valuable as showing how loosely these elections were conducted in the upper country, and how little they can be relied upon as representing the sentiment of the mass of the people. It is evident that the representatives of the remote districts whose prudence was so commended by the President, represented in fact only those who voluntarily came together for the purpose of sending them, without writs of election or other formality, and without any general notice or mode of procedure in doing so.

The debate on the subject of the church came up on the dissenters' petition in January, 1777, and on the 11th Mr. Tennent, who was a member of the Assembly, made an exceedingly able speech contending that ecclesiastical establishments were an infringement on civil liberty. The rights of conscience, he maintained, were unalienable, and all laws binding upon it *ipso facto* null and void. Such, he contended, was the law prevailing in Carolina. The law acknowledges one society as a Christian church, it does not know the other at all. Under a reputedly free government licenses for marriage were refused by the ordinary to any but the established clergy. The law builds superb churches for the one; it leaves the others

¹ The districts alluded to were Chester, Fairfield, and Richland, — the Broad River changing its name to Congaree, and the Catawba becoming the Wateree.

to build their own. The law enables the one church to hold estates and to sue for rights; but no dissenting church can sue at common law. They are obliged to deposit their property with trustees. The law vests in the Church of England power to tax their own people, and all other denominations for the support of the poor. The sums advanced by the public Treasury for the support of the Church of England, for the ten years preceding the 31st of December, 1775, amount to £164,027 16s. 3d. (currency). The expenses of the year 1772 was £18,031 11s. 1d. The real estate drawn more or less from the purses of all denominations by law would probably sell for £330,000. If the dissenters have always made more than half of the government, the sum taken out of their pockets for the support of a church with which they did not worship must amount to more than £82,013 within the ten years, and a very large sum of their property in glebes, parsonages, and churches lies in the possession and improvement of the Church of England. Meanwhile, said Mr. Tennent, the established churches are but twenty in number, many of them very small, while the number of dissenting congregations are seventy-nine, and much larger, and would pay £40,000 annually could they be furnished with a clergy. To the objection that dissenters were tolerated, Mr. Tennent asked if it would content these brethren of the Church of England to be *barely tolerated*, that is, not punished for presuming to think for themselves. It was not the *threepence on the pound of tea* that roused all the valor of America, he exclaimed, it is our birthright we prize. Religious establishments, he continued, discourage the opulence and discourage the growth of a free State. With the new Constitution, let the day of justice dawn upon every rank and order of man in the State. Let us bury what is past forever. We even consent, he

said, that the estate which the church has for a century past been drawing more or less from the purses of all denominations — an estate of no less value than £380,000 — remain in her quiet possession and be fixed there. Let her only for the future cease to demand preëminence. We seek no restitution. Let her be contented with her superb churches, her spacious burying-grounds, her costly parsonages, her numerous glebes and other church estates, and let her not now insist upon such glaring partiality any longer. Many of the Church of England, he declared, had signed the petition. Many more have declared the sentiments in the most liberal terms. They do not desire any longer to oppress their brethren. Grant them the prayer of the petition, grant it in substance if not in the very expression. Let it be a foundation article in your constitution. "That there shall be no establishment of one religious denomination of Christians in preference to another. That none shall be obliged to pay to the support of a worship in which they do not freely join." Yield to the mighty current of American freedom and glory, and let your State be inferior to none on the wide continent in the liberality of the laws and in the happiness of its people."¹

Most eloquently, indeed, did Mr. Tennent then plead for principles which are now universally accepted in this country at least. True, some of his statements were open to fair criticism. The bulk of the seventy-nine congregations of dissenters, upon which he based his calculations, were in the newly settled Up Country which notoriously paid few taxes. The tax-gatherers were as few there as ministers of the law. The Low Country, in which was the great wealth of the province, paid all the taxes, and the taxable property there was, to a great extent, owned by

¹ *Hist. Presbyterian Church in So. Ca.* (Howe), vol. I, 370, 371.

churchmen ; and they consequently contributed by far the most to the support of the church. But this only affected the argument in degree and not in principle. The fact still was that dissenters were made to contribute more or less to the church in which they did not worship, and that the church was made the basis of representation and municipal authority. The argument was of course all on one side ; but there was a deep sentiment on the other — a sentiment, offence to which was particularly unfortunate at this juncture. The churchmen had sown the wind, they were now reaping the whirlwind. They had overthrown the King's authority ; the dissenters were now overturning the church.

A letter written about this time, January 18, 1777, by Richard Hutson, a son of a former minister of the Congregational church in Charlestown, to Isaac Hayne, his brother-in-law, the future martyr to the cause of American liberty, gives so clear an account of the condition of parties at this time that we cannot do better than quote it at length. Mr. Hutson writes to Mr. Hayne : —

“I think it will be extraordinary if I should give you the first intelligence of your election as a Representative in Assembly for the Parish of St. Paul, Stono. It will indeed convince me that you are a recluse. The return was made to the House on Wednesday last. It is said that you had but four votes, and it has been thrown out by some of the high churchmen that were they in your situation they would not serve, but I hope you will make it a point at this juncture, as we stand in need of your assistance. The Dissenters' Petition came before the House on Saturday last. It was introduced and warmly supported by General Gadsden. In order to give you a general idea of the debates, it will be necessary to quote the paragraph, which it was the prayer of the Petition might be inserted in the Constitution. It runs thus: That there never shall be any establishment of any one Denomination or sect of Protestants by way of preference to another in this State. That no Protestant inhabitant of this State shall, by law, be obliged to pay towards the maintenance and support of a reli-

gious worship that he does not freely join in or has not voluntarily engaged to support, nor to be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of his religious principles, but that all Protestants demeaning themselves peaceably under the government established under the constitution shall enjoy free and equal privileges, both religious and civil. Messrs. Lowndes and Pinckney¹ threw off the masque and argued strongly for having the church continued upon its former footing, the rest pretended to acquiesce cheerfully in the latter part of the clause (viz.) that no Protestant inhabitant of this State shall, by law, be obliged to pay towards the maintenance and support of a religious worship that he does not freely join in, &c., but plead that it was necessary that the establishment of the church should be continued on account of the provision of the poor and the management of elections which were interwoven with law, and they proposed that this clause should be amended by striking out the former part of it (viz.) 'that there never shall be an establishment of any one Denomination, or sect of Protestants, by way of preference to another in this State.' After very long and warm debate upon the subject the question was at length put upon the amendment, it passed in the negative, ^{nays 70} _{yeas 60}.

The question was then put upon the whole clause, and it was unanimously agreed to. We yesterday finished the difficult Reports of the committee on the Constitution with regard to amendments therein, and it is now ordered to be thrown into a Bill. A motion will be made, and I have no doubt but it will be carried, to have it printed and circulated through the State, and to postpone the passing of it till the next session, when I expect they will renew the attack upon that clause. So we shall have as much occasion of your presence as ever."

As Mr. Hutson predicted, the Assembly postponed for the present this important step; but they made another, and a most decisive one — one from which there was no returning either with honor or safety. They had adopted the Declaration of Independence, and they now (February 13, 1777) passed an ordinance for establishing an oath of abjuration of the King and of allegiance to the State. They ordained that the President with the advice

¹ Colonel Charles Pinckney.

of the Privy Council should appoint proper persons to administer an oath to all the late officers of the King of Great Britain, and all other persons whom the President and Privy Council should suspect of holding principles injurious to the right of the State. This oath required any such person to declare that he acknowledged the State of South Carolina is and of right ought to be a free, independent, and sovereign State, and that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great Britain, to abjure any allegiance or obedience to him, to swear that he would to the utmost of his power support, maintain, and defend the State against the said George the Third and his successors, and to swear further that he would bear faith and true allegiance to the State, and to the utmost of his power, support, maintain, and defend the freedom and independence thereof. They further ordained that if any person refused to take this oath he should be sent from the State with his family to Europe or the West Indies at the public expense, except such as were able to pay their own, and that if any such person returned he should be adjudged guilty of treason against the State, and upon conviction should suffer death as a traitor.¹

Upon the organization of the government under the Constitution of 1776, says Drayton, the necessity of having a seal became apparent, and by a resolution of the General Assembly his Excellency the President and Commander-in-chief by and with the advice and consent of the General Assembly was authorized to design and cause to be made a great seal of South Carolina, and until such a one could be made to adopt a temporary one.

In pursuance of this resolution William Henry Drayton and others of the Privy Council were charged wi

¹ *Stat. at Large*, vol. I, 135.

designing a seal, and in the meantime a temporary one was adopted for immediate use. The first use of the temporary seal was for commissioning the civil officers of the government, and for a pardon issued by President Rutledge dated the 1st of May, 1776, to a person who had been convicted of manslaughter before Chief Justice Drayton and his associate justices on the 23d of April. This temporary seal was from that time until about the 22d of May designated "the Temporary Seal of the said Colony" or "The Temporary Public Seal"; on that day President Rutledge issued a pardon under "*the Seal of the said State*," omitting the word "temporary," whence there is reason to believe the great seal was then made. The seal thus adopted has continued to be the great seal of the State of South Carolina to this day.¹

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 372, 376.

The device for the armorial achievement and reverse of the great seal of South Carolina is as follows:—

Arms: a palmetto tree growing on seashore, erect; at its base a torn-up oak tree, its branches lopped off, prostrate; *both proper*. Just below the branches of the palmetto, two shields, pendent; one of them on the dexter side is inscribed *March 26*, proper; the other side, *July 4*. Twelve spears, *proper*, are bound crosswise to the stem of the palmetto, their points raised, the band uniting them together bearing the inscription *Quis Separabit*. Under the prostrate oak is inscribed *Meliorum Lapsa Locarit*, below which appears in large figures 1776. At the summit of the exergue are the words SOUTH CAROLINA; and at the bottom of the same, ANIMIS OPIBUSQUE PARATI.

Reverse: a woman walking on the seashore over swords and daggers; she holds in her dexter hand a laurel branch, and in her sinister the folds of her robe; she looks toward the sun just rising above the sea; *all proper*. On the upper part is the sky, *azure*. At the summit of the exergue are the words DUM SPIRO SPERO, and within the field below the figure is inscribed the word SPES. The seal is in the form of a circle, four inches diameter and four-tenths of an inch thick.

The preparation of the seal was ordered in March, 1776, but it is apparent that this design was not made until after the victory of the 28th of June.



The victory of Sullivan's Island gave exemption to South Carolina from invasion for nearly three years. During this she felt few of the terrors of war — those were yet to come. But the harbor of Charlestown was blockaded, to a greater or less extent, until the fall of the city in 1780. British cruisers were constantly hovering off the bar and making prizes of vessels attempting to enter or leave the port. The vessels of war *Carriaford*, of thirty-two guns, the *Perseus*, twenty, and the *Hinchenbrook*, sixteen, were often in sight of the town. The immense trade with England was of course now at an end. War had practically enforced non-importation. The old merchants unwilling to risk their capital generally retired from business, but adventurers sent out vessels to the Dutch and French West Indies. Nor could the State government sit idly by and allow the British cruisers all the honor and profit of capturing prizes. The Continental Congress had authorized reprisals, and South Carolina

The *arms* were designed by William Henry Drayton. The fort constructed of palmetto logs, suggesting the emblem of the palmetto tree on the seashore; the date on the shield, March 26, alludes to the adoption of the Constitution of the State, and that of July 4 to the Declaration of Independence. The twelve spears represent, it is said, the twelve States which first acceded to the Union; but we rather suppose that they were meant to represent the twelve other colonies besides South Carolina, which were thus indicated as being bound to her. The dead oak tree alludes to the British fleet as being constructed of oak timbers, and lying prostrate under the palmetto tree. Hence the inscription of *Meliorem Lapsa Locavit* is appropriately placed underneath it. The figures 1776 allude, of course, to the three memorable events, — the adoption of the Constitution of the State, the victory of Fort Moultrie, and the Declaration of Independence.

The *reverse* of the arms is said to have been designed by Arthur Middleton. The woman walking along the seashore strewn with swords and daggers represents Hope overcoming dangers, which the sun just rising was about to disclose in the occurrences of the 28th of June, 1776, while the laurel she holds signifies the honors which Colonel Moultrie, his officers and men, gained on that auspicious day.

organized a small navy of her own to venture upon that business. The ship *Prosper*, which had been fitted out in 1775, was mounted with twenty guns. Three schooners, — the *Comet*, the *Defence*, and the *Beaufort*, — which had been used as galleys for the protection of inland navigation, were converted into brigs. These vessels were put under the order of a navy board consisting of Edward Blake, Roger Smith, Josiah Smith, Edward Darrell, Thomas Corbet, John Edwards, George Abbott Hall, and Thomas Savage. The board added another vessel; they built a brig of fourteen guns which they called the *Hornet*. These vessels evading the British men-of-war cruising upon the high seas succeeded in bringing in several prizes. In the year 1777 the continental frigate *Randolph*, Captain Biddle, put into Charlestown in distress, and being refitted she sailed on a cruise, and in eight days returned with four rich prizes. These encouraged the State to attempt something more in the same way. The ship *General Moultrie*, Captain Sullivan, the brig *Polly*, Captain Anthony, and the brig *Fair American*, Captain Morgan, belonging to private persons, were taken into the public service, and as we shall see were, with the continental frigate *Randolph* and another State vessel, the brig *Notre Dame*, lost the next year in an unfortunate expedition.

The great advantages resulting to the State from her little navy, and the distress sustained by the trade for want of protection, induced a scheme for purchasing or building three frigates. Alexander Gillon, an extensive merchant of the town, was appointed commodore, and John Joyner, William Robertson, and John McQueen, captains, of the proposed fleet, and sailed for Europe to procure the frigates. This, however, because of various embarrassments from intercepted remittances and other causes, he was unable to do. Gillon accomplished nothing more than

to purchase on credit for the use of the State a quantity of clothing and ammunition, and to hire a large frigate from the Chevalier Luxembourg for the term of three years, on condition of allowing the Prince one-fourth of the prizes captured while she cruised at the risk and expense of South Carolina.¹ The frigate engaged was built at Amsterdam, of a particular construction, heavy in di-

¹ The author is not unmindful of the very interesting story told in Dr. Johnson's *Traditions*, 127-129, of an exploit by Mr. Gillon before his appointment as commodore, but he has not been able to adopt it. The story is that sometime in the year 1777-78, the harbor being blockaded by three British cruisers, Alexander Gillon, a merchant, volunteered to go out with the only armed vessel in the port and raise the blockade if the Governor would sanction it and would supply him with a sufficient number of marines; that the Governor did so, and drafted the marines from the regulars in the State service; that disguising the vessel as a merchantman attempting to run the blockade, Gillon sailed out, and tolling on one of the British cruisers which was distant from the others until in the pursuit he had separated it to some distance, he suddenly ran alongside his pursuer, threw out his grappling irons, and at the head of his marines, boarded and captured her. Then dividing his men and his prisoners between the two vessels, and hoisting a British flag over his own vessel, he made easy sail to the next, which, supposing her consort to have made a capture, allowed him to run alongside of her also, and likewise to capture; and so also with the third. The story will not bear a moment's examination. The three British cruisers which blockaded the harbor were the *Carrisford*, the *Perseus*, and the *Hinchenbrook*, as mentioned in the text. None of these was captured until April, 1779, when the last was taken in a gallant action by Colonel Elbert of Georgia while lying at Frederica in that State. It is impossible to suppose that such a brilliant performance would have been suppressed by both Dr. Ramsay and General Moultrie, who were present and personally cognizant of all that was going on, especially as both of these give in detail an account of Mr. Gillon's action in regard to a State navy, and still more especially as General Moultrie must have particularly known of the detail of the troops for the purpose. It is equally impossible to suppose that the *Gazettes*, which during the years 1777 and 1778 give daily account of the British cruisers off the bar and the captures made by them, and also of the captures made by the State navy, would have omitted to mention so extraordinary an affair. The author has searched

mension, equal to a seventy-four-gun ship. Commodore Gillon engaged on behalf of South Carolina 280 marines and 69 seamen to man this frigate. These were kept at Dunkirk for several months until the ship could be got into the Texel, as her draught prevented her getting out from Amsterdam with the men aboard. While waiting for the frigate, the men, though engaged, fed, paid, and clothed with the money of the State of South Carolina, were sent without the knowledge of Commodore Gillon on an expedition against the island of Jersey, and so many of them were killed in that unfortunate expedition in January, 1781, that the frigate was disabled from going to sea till the August following. After innumerable difficulties she began to cruise, and in a short time captured several valuable prizes. She took part in an expedition against the Bahama Islands in May, 1782, and upon the termination of that expedition arrived in Philadelphia. Completely repaired there she put to sea from that port under the command of Captain Joyner, and on the second day out was captured by the British under circumstances which reflected hardly upon Captain Joyner's conduct. In the spirited attempt to create a navy South Carolina lost heavily. Ramsay estimates the cost, including the intercepted remittances and the clothing and ammunition purchased by Commander Gillon for the public service, with disbursements on account of the frigate, at over \$200,000, but other estimates put it at more than twice that amount, to wit, £100,000 sterling, or \$500,000.¹

the *Gazette* and can find no mention of the occurrence. The story is evidently based upon Governor Robert Johnson's exploit in the year 1718, when he captured the pirate vessels by a similar ruse [see *Hist. of So. Ca. under Prop. Gov.* (McCrady), 612, 616], and partly on the draft of regulars to serve as marines on the *Randolph*, and of their loss, of which we shall presently tell.

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 72-75; Johnson's *Traditions*, 127-131.

Soon after the trade between Great Britain and South Carolina had been closed a few adventurous individuals began, as we have said, to send vessels to the Dutch and French West Indies Islands. The scarcity of salt was easily foreseen, and to prevent the advantage which might be taken of the needs of the people on this account eight gentlemen entered into a partnership and employed six swift-sailing vessels in Bermuda, which they employed in transporting that necessary article. They continued their business until one after the other all their vessels were taken. The demand for imported goods, the stoppage of all commerce with Great Britain, and the blockade of the port, though the blockade was not at all times effectual, greatly excited the spirit for adventure, and the running of the blockade of Charlestown in 1776-78 was the prototype of that of 1862-65. All the well-known devices of foreign registers, foreign captains, and foreign flags, French, Dutch, English, or American, were employed as the exigency of the case required. The opportunity to sell imported articles dear, and to buy country produce cheap, was so great that during the years 1776 and 1778 the safe arrival of two vessels would indemnify the loss of one. During these years in which the war was confined almost entirely to the Northern States Charlestown became the mart of supplying with goods most of the States as far as New Jersey. Many hundreds of wagons were employed in the traffic. For the encouragement of trade two insurance companies opened offices which greatly forwarded the extension of commerce. A direct trade to France was attempted, and French vessels found their way into the port. The intercourse in the commencement proved unfortunate, for out of sixteen vessels richly laden with commodities of the country four only arrived safely in France. This heavy blow for a short time damped the spirit of enterprise,

but it soon revived. Attempts were now made by block-ade-running to procure military supplies, which the unwise non-importation business had prevented while the ports were open. Three vessels were employed by the State for the purpose of obtaining supplies and clothing for the new-raised regiments in the State and continental service, but it was the good fortune of but one to succeed in bringing in a cargo. Two with guns and clothing were captured. The spirit of adventure daily increased, a considerable trade though of course much inferior to what had been usual in times of peace was carried on in this manner ; at no times it was said were fortunes more easily or rapidly acquired—and it may be added, more easily or rapidly lost. Occasionally the market would be enriched by a prize taken by the continental or State navy and successfully brought into port, but the trade had not only the British cruisers to dread, still more discouraging was the old non-importation idea exhibiting itself in embargoes by which for military purposes the sailing of vessels was interdicted.¹ The depreciation of the currency was also creating great distress among the people generally, especially in Charlestown, where provisions of all kinds rose rapidly in price as the currency declined in value. The *Gazette* of April 24, 1777, states that the extravagant price of provisions brought to the market almost exceeds belief. Beef has been sold at 7s. 6d. per pound, mutton £5 the quarter. Fresh butter 10s. and salt butter 8s. 9d. the pound. Turkeys £6 and geese £4 the pair ; corn blades £4 the one hundred pound, and other things in proportion. The distress of the poor, the *Gazette* said, demands the more serious consideration, and it suggests a subscription to be set on foot for supplying the market at more reasonable rates. In May provisions continued at most exorbitant

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 72-77.

rates. Influenced by disinterested patriotism, some gentlemen sent provisions to town with orders to their servants, who were their hucksters, not to demand above certain moderate prices whatever others might ask. The commissioners of the market in Charlestown required that the owners of provisions should provide tickets stipulating the price asked, so as to put a check on the exorbitant demands of those selling them, and they punished with fine and imprisonment those who violated these regulations. But the evil continued to such an extent that the General Assembly took up the matter, and by an act reciting that by the common practice of persons buying up and engrossing at public vendue sales large quantities of commodities at extravagant prices without regard to their value, with a view of obtaining an unreasonable advance in retailing the same, the price of almost every necessary article had been raised to a most exorbitant and expensive height, whereby it was extremely difficult for the poor and industrious to procure the common conveniences of life, and that the currency both of the Continent and of the State had been greatly depreciated, to the impoverishment of many honest craftsmen and others who, by mispending and loitering their time in expectation of gaining bargains at such sales and outeries, had greatly neglected their respective occupations, prohibited these sales of goods at public vendue in the State.¹ The Assembly also passed another act reciting the association of the Continental Congress, declaring against every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially against horse-racing, and providing that if any person should violate the said Association by any manner of horse-racing, he should forfeit the money he bet and the horse so run.² Again arose the non-importation idea, and an ordinance was passed declaring that it was

¹ *Statutes at Large*, vol. IV, 395.

² *Ibid.*, 394

highly impolitic as well as injurious to the interests and safety of the State that any commercial intercourse should be carried on with any of the dominions of the King of Great Britain, and forbidding under penalty of forfeiture the importation of any goods from them.

While the General Assembly was thus engaged, and was busy also providing for the raising of money and the stamping of bills of credit and for the maintenance of the government, it was still alive to the necessity of providing for the education of the youth of the State during these troublous times, and, as we have seen, were establishing schools at Winnsboro, Camden, and on the Wateree.¹

Dr. Ramsay gives a very able and interesting account of the currency in South Carolina during this period.² He tells us that the paper money issued by Congress retained its value undiminished longer in South Carolina than in other parts of the United States. There was no sensible depreciation of it at the end of 1776, notwithstanding the loss of New York and other British victories at the North threatening the subversion of American independence. Men of property had now so generally come forward in support of the Revolution that their influence was supposed to be fully equal to the maintenance of the new currency, even in a Royal house of assembly, if the conquest of the State should restore the King's government. The immense value of the staple commodities of the country, the animation and apparent unanimity and enthusiasm of the people, precluded all fear of its finally sinking. When the depreciation took place it originated, Dr. Ramsay thinks, from other causes than a distrust of the final success of the Revolution.

The emission of a paper currency in 1775 and 1776, he

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 502, 504.

² *Ramsay's Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 77-100.

maintains, was of real advantage to the State of South Carolina, for the whole money then in circulation was inadequate to the purposes of a medium of trade. For several years before the termination of the Royal government, from three thousand to five thousand negroes had been annually imported. Payment for these absorbed the greater part of the gold and silver procured at foreign markets for the commodities of the country. The emission of paper currency had been, by Royal instructions, for a considerable time wholly prohibited. In the absence of a proper circulating medium, payments were often made by transfer and assignment of private notes and obligations. Bills to a considerable amount, issued on the credit of four gentlemen of large estates, had a currency equal to coin. Certificates of the clerk of the Commons, House of Assembly, countersigned by certain of its members, passed currently for money, though issued by the sole authority of but one branch of the legislature. The ability of the province to pay its debts, and the strict observance of good faith in performing all its engagements, had established the soundest credit. As hard money was either hoarded up by men of forecast or shipped to purchase foreign commodities, and the continental currency was mostly confined to the Northern States till near the beginning of the year 1778, the State emission did not for a considerable time exceed the quantity necessary for circulation. The sums issued by the State from June 14, 1775, to February, 1779, amounted to £7,817,553-6-10, which were received at the old provincial currency rate of seven for one of sterling. Besides these provincial bills those of the Continental Congress were made legal tender in payment of debts in South Carolina. The emission from this source in the first five years of the war amounted to \$200,000,000.

The paper currency, as we have seen, retained its value undiminished in South Carolina for eighteen months, viz. from June, 1775, to January, 1777. Then began a most ruinous depreciation. At first its progress was scarcely perceptible, and was very slow throughout the year 1777. The enormous expenses of the armies in the Northern States required immense supplies of money, and from the beginning of the year 1778 great quantities of continental currency began to flow into the State, and then the depreciation became much more rapid. The causes of depreciation operating most forcibly in the Northern States produced an earlier and greater fall in value there than in South Carolina; but as money, like water, finds its level, an adventurous trader at the North, learning that continental currency was worth more at the South, repaired here with large sums of it, and contributed more to its depreciation in South Carolina than all the emissions of the State. The *Randolph's* prizes which arrived early in 1778 were supposed to have brought into South Carolina half a million dollars. From this time, says Ramsay, an artificial depreciation was superadded to the natural. Holders of paper money, finding that it lost part of its value, were constantly in quest of bargains. Foreseeing that Congress would make further emissions for the supplies of the army, they considered it better to purchase any kind of property than to lay up their money. The progressive superabundance of cash produced a daily rise in the price of commodities. Large nominal sums tempted many possessors of real estate to sell. The diminished value of the money was mistaken for an increased price of commodities. Then, again, the plundering and devastation of the enemy wherever they obtained a foothold made some think that their property would be safer when turned into money than when subject to the casualties of war. The disposi-

tion to sell was in a great degree proportioned to confidence in the justice and final success of the Revolution, superadded to expectations of a speedy termination of the war. The most sanguine Whigs were, therefore, oftenest duped by the fallacious sound of high prices. These principles operated so extensively that property in a considerable degree changed its owners. Many opulent persons of ancient families were ruined by selling paternal estates for a depreciating currency, which in a few weeks would not replace half of the real property in exchange for which it was obtained. Many bold adventurers, says the same author, made fortunes by running into debt beyond their abilities. Prudence ceased to be a virtue, and rashness usurped its place. The warm friends of America who never despaired of their country, and who cheerfully risked their fortunes in its support, lost their property; while the timid who looked forward to the reestablishment of British government not only saved their former possessions, but often increased them. In the American Revolution, for the first time, the friends of the successful party were the losers.

The surrender of Charlestown on May 12, 1780, wholly arrested the circulation of the paper currency, and put a great part of the State in possession of the British, when many contracts for these nominal sums were unperformed and after many individuals had received payment of old debts in depreciated paper. The honorable James Simpson, Intendent General of the British Police, commissioned thirteen gentlemen to inquire into the different stages of depreciation, so as to ascertain a fixed rule for payment in hard money of outstanding contracts, and to compel those who had settled with their creditors to make up by a second payment the difference between the real and nominal value of the currency. The commissioners pro-

ceeded on principles of equity, and compared prices of country produce when the paper currency was in circulation with its prices in the year before the war, and also with the rate of exchange between hard money and the paper bills of credit. From an average of the two they fixed on a table in accordance with which all contracts were scaled.¹ This scheme of adjusting transactions en-

¹ A TABLE

Ascertaining the progressive depreciation of the paper currency by taking an average of the prices of gold and silver and the country produce at different periods.

Date of each period.	Depreciation by value of specie.	Depreciation by value of country produce.	Average of depreciation.
1777 April 1	113 per cent.	157 per cent.	135 per cent.
July 1	127 "	198 "	163 "
Oct. 1	176 "	214 "	195 "
1778 Jan. 1	287 "	287 "	287 "
March 1	337 "	470 "	404 "
May 1	440 "	622 "	531 "
July 1	483 "	539 "	526 "
Sept. 1	500 "	577 "	538 "
Nov. 1	563 "	533 "	548 "
1779 Jan. 1	1000 "	596 "	798 "
Feb. 1	1250 "	661 "	955 "
March 1	1350 "	897 "	1123 "
April 1	1400 "	1191 "	1295 "
May 1	1450 "	1116 "	1283 "
June 1	1350 "	1303 "	1326 "
July 1	1720 "	1355 "	1537 "
Aug. 1	2085 "	1551 "	1818 "
Sept. 1	2340 "	1691 "	2015 "
Oct. 1	2100 "	1885 "	1992 "
Nov. 1	2911 "	1983 "	2447 "
Dec. 1	3485 "	2174 "	2830 "
1780 Jan. 1	3833 "	2923 "	3378 "
Feb. 1	4457 "	4291 "	4374 "
March 1	5240 "	4525 "	4882 "
April 1	6583 "	5065 "	5824 "
May 1	11000 "	5170 "	8085 "
June 1	11000 "	5229 "	8114 "

tered into during the existence of a fluctuating w
currency was followed after the war between the Stat
in South Carolina by "an act to determine the value
contracts made in Confederate States notes or th
equivalent" by which United States currency was ma
the basis of scaling instead of sterling and the form
price of commodities.¹

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. XIV, 277.



CHAPTER XI

1778

SIR HENRY CLINTON and Lord Cornwallis after their repulse from Charlestown had sailed for New York, where they had arrived in time to take part in the battle of Long Island in which they had somewhat revived the laurels they had allowed to droop in Charlestown harbor. Then had followed a year of disaster to the American cause at the North. The battle of Long Island had been lost. Washington had abandoned New York, and the British had occupied and held it. The battle of White Plains had been fought and likewise lost. Washington had retreated through the Jerseys, and the people had refused to join him. The Governor, Council, Assembly, and magistracy had deserted the province. The militia of Pennsylvania had refused to turn out. The braggart Lee, with his stolen honor from Moultrie, had been captured. The battle of Brandywine had been lost. The Continental Congress had fled from Philadelphia, and that city, like New York, had been abandoned to the enemy and willingly received them. Then had followed the battle of Germantown with no better success. The only breaks in the long list of disasters had been the attacks upon Trenton and Princeton ; but the first of these, though brilliant and successful, had been but an affair of an outpost, and the second merely a successful move by which a defeat had been averted. Neither had affected the issue of the campaign. The success of the British forces in the Northern provinces had been uniform. The American troops

were dispirited, and the British correspondingly elated. But in October, 1777, the tide had turned, and Burgoyne's army was captured. The surrender at Saratoga forms a memorable era in the history of the Revolution. So extraordinary an event as the capture of a whole army of their enemies revived the American cause, lessened in the mind of the American soldier the high opinion which he had entertained of British valor and discipline, and inspired him with a juster confidence in himself. But the consequences which the event produced in Europe were of still greater moment. For the present, however, these were unknown in the colonies. The Revolutionary party had as yet nothing upon which to count but a stronger reliance on their own resources and the encouragement of a brilliant success.

The legislature which had adjourned in midsummer, 1777, met on the 9th of January, 1778, when John Rutledge the President made to it the customary speech upon opening its session.¹ First, he laid before them the Articles of Confederation, which had been under discussion in the Continental Congress since July, 1776, and had only been finally adopted for recommendation to the States in November, 1777. These articles, he said, were offered to the respective States for their consideration with a recommendation that all be reviewed with candor, examined with liberality, and adjusted with temper and magnanimity. In allusion to the well-known fact that the Continental Congress was almost abandoned by its members, especially since it had been driven from Philadelphia and was sitting at York in Pennsylvania, he urged that the State should be represented in that body by several delegates at all times, more especially when a confederacy was to be concluded.

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, January 29, 1778. There are no journals of this Assembly to be found.

The State, he said, had been called upon for \$500,000. "You will devise the best way of raising that sum, and although it certainly exceeds our proportion of the money desired from the Continent by them, yet I doubt not that you will readily comply with their requisition, as the ravages of war have rendered some of our sister States less able than this to furnish their just quota."

The President then proceeded : —

"You will also propose the most effectual and least burthensome mode of supporting the public credit and making such provisions as may be adequate to the exigencies of the government. The expenses which have been and must unavoidably be incurred are undoubtedly great, but altogether inconsiderate when compared with the inestimable object for which we contend, as I am confident they will appear to you and to your constituents, for the same spirit which animated the good people of South Carolina to resolve on the most vigorous opposition to tyranny will induce them to grant with the greatest alacrity every necessary aid for the support of that opposition (until by the blessing of God on American fortitude and perseverance), the vain expectations of our haughty enemies shall be frustrated and their pride humbled, that the ruinous consequences of the folly and wickedness shall oblige them to relinquish all hope of revenue and conquest, and agree to the separation occasioned by their unbounded avarice and arrogance, and to a peace which will secure the sovereignty and independence of America."

In less than two months from the time of this speech we shall find John Rutledge, who was now exhorting the Assembly to provide the means of carrying on the struggle until Great Britain agreed to a separation and to the sovereignty and independence of America, resigning the office of President rather than approve a permanent constitution, the adoption of which would preclude a reconciliation with the mother country ! But we anticipate.

The President then went on to say that the act for prohibiting vendues had not had the intended effect,

but that the evil daily increased. It appeared necessary, therefore, to make trial of some other remedy ; and as a plentiful supply of goods was the surest way of reducing prices, he submitted whether it might not be expedient to establish a board of commerce for importing such merchandise as might be wanted for the Indian trade and other public services, and for accommodating the inhabitants of the State who were in low or middling circumstances with the articles most requisite for their own consumption at reasonable rates. But why did he not rather recommend the removal of all restrictions from importation and trade, and allow the merchants to bring in what goods they could, regardless from whence they came? No! the idea of non-importation from England as a means of warfare had taken deep root in the public mind. And now that necessity was pressing, the President suggested a board of commerce to be intrusted with the trade. The President went on to suggest that as it was evident that during the continuance of the present troubles extraordinary power must be exercised by the executive authority in every State, that it would be more constitutional that the legislature should determine what was fit to be intrusted to the executive, as it was safer for the people that their representatives should vest such by a temporary law than the executive should exercise any under the sanction of necessity only.

A week after the legislature met, and while they were considering the Governor's speech, a great calamity befell Charlestown. On the 13th of January a fire occurred in which two hundred and fifty houses were burnt. The loss by the most moderate computation was said to exceed \$3,000,000 ; by some it was estimated at £1,000,000 sterling. The valuable collection of books of the Charlestown Library, between six and seven thousand volumes, with its

instruments and apparatus for astronomical and philosophical observations and experiments, were almost entirely lost.¹ There were strong suspicions that the fire was the work of British incendiaries, and these led to an expedition which added to the disaster.

The British men-of-war *Carriaford*, *Perseus*, and *Hinchbrook* were lying off the harbor, and their men were frequently in the town getting provisions and intelligence from the Tories, who enabled them to avoid the guards. Moultrie in his *Memoirs* says that the men-of-war's boats were in town every night, and that there was every reason to believe that the fire had been started by them. Whether this was really true or not, the belief probably determined a project to rid the harbor of the men-of-war, which had been for some time under consideration.

A month before, the 12th of December, President Rutledge had written to General Howe, then in command of the troops in South Carolina and Georgia, urging the necessity of clearing the coast of these vessels, and stating that Captain Biddle had agreed to go on a cruise for the purpose with the fleet which had been raised by the State. This fleet consisted of the *Randolph*, thirty-six guns, Captain Biddle; *Polly*, sixteen guns, Captain Anthony; *General Moultrie*, eighteen guns, Captain Sullivan; *Fair American*, fourteen guns, Captain Morgan; *Notre Dame*, sixteen guns, Captain Hall. But it was expedient, the President wrote, that a number of marines should be embarked in these vessels, and that the Council had advised that General Howe should order as many of the continental troops under his command as Captain Biddle

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, January 29, 1778; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, 200. The library at Harvard had been burned in 1764. It then contained five thousand volumes.

might think necessary to be detached on the service. Upon this General Howe called a council of war to consider the proposal. The Council, consisting of General William Moultrie, Colonel Isaac Huger, Colonel Motte, Colonel Roberts, Colonel C. C. Pinckney, Colonel Sumter, Lieutenant Colonel Marion, and Major Peter Horry, declared that there would be no impropriety in sending the detachment required, provided the remaining troops were sufficient for the defence of the State ; but upon this point they were of opinion that there were not men enough for this purpose. General Howe did not approve of the report, and reconvened the Council to reconsider these reports, as he was of opinion the military would be highly censurable for not complying with the requisition of the Governor and Council. But the council of war declared they could not alter their former opinion, that they would be unworthy of the commissions they held if they could be induced, by the dread of censure or any other motive, to give an opinion contrary to their honor and conscience. President Rutledge, however, represented to General Moultrie that there were a number of vessels expected in every day with military stores and other articles much needed and that unless these men-of-war could be driven from the coast, they would be lost. Upon this General Moultrie gave in to the extent of recommending to General Howe to allow a detachment of one hundred and fifty men. The troops were put aboard a few days after the fire, to wit, on the 27th of January, and the fleet sailed some days afterward. The *Carriisford*, *Perseus*, and *Hinchbrook* at once quitted the coast. The fleet were gone almost ten weeks when they fell in with the *Yarmouth* a British sixty-four-gun ship which the *Randolph* immediately engaged, but in a short time after the action commenced the *Randolph* blew up and all on board perished.

except two or three who were picked up from the wreck by the *Yarmouth's* crew. Captain Ioor and his whole company of the First Regiment — fifty men who had been put on board the *Randolph* as marines — were lost, and so also was Captain Biddle himself, who was esteemed one of the very best naval officers in the country. The remainder of the fleet made the best of their way home, and thus ended an expedition undertaken against the judgment of the military officers upon the urgency of the President and Council.

In the meanwhile the legislature had been busily at work. The question of the disestablishment of the church while pressed had become merged in one of still greater importance. This was no less than the forming of an entirely new constitution. The Provincial Congress in March, 1776, had, as we have seen, assumed to form a constitution against the protest of many who maintained that such a fundamental instrument should only be framed by a full and free representation of the people called for the purpose. Under this Constitution which was to be in force only until an accommodation of the unhappy differences between Great Britain and America could be obtained, the present General Assembly had been elected and derived their authority from its provisions, and from its provisions only. There was no power or authority given by that Constitution to the General Assembly to amend or alter it. Whether the body enacting it had or had not been a properly representative one for such a purpose, the instrument as it stood was the chart and limit of the authority of those assembled under it. By it legislative authority was vested in the President, the General Assembly, and Legislative Council, with a power of veto in the President. But the body sitting under the so-called Constitution had already assumed the right of amending it. With the

assent of John Rutledge, President, this General Assembly had passed the ordinance whereby the oath prescribed by the Constitution of 1776 to support and defend that Constitution until an accommodation of the differences between Great Britain and America should take place, had been changed to one acknowledging the independence of the State, abjuring allegiance to the King, and swearing faith and allegiance to the State.¹ If, then, this Assembly could alter the Constitution in one particular, why not in another? and why not altogether? Granting the right in the first instance, it was now too late to resist it because of the particulars in which it was now to be exercised.

These particulars, however, were most distasteful to many of those who had hitherto controlled, if not led, the revolutionary movement. Two of them were most objectionable to a large party, to wit: (1) the disestablishment of the church, and (2) the establishment of a second chamber—a Senate in the place of the Legislative Council, to be elected by the people directly. These changes were far too democratic for the churchmen who had hitherto been in the control. The discussion lasted through the winter, and, strange to say, moved by some now unknown influence, Rawlins Lowndes, the extreme conservative, was now in full accord with Christopher Gadsden and William Henry Drayton in pressing this measure on the Assembly. The bill enacting the new Constitution was finally passed and sent to the President for his approval, but on the 5th of March President Rutledge vetoed it under the power given him by the Constitution of 1776.² His reasons for so doing he gave in a very able speech to the Legislative Council and General Assembly. He declared that he had taken an oath to preside over the

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. I, 135.

² *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, March 12, 1778.

people of the State according to the Constitution or form of government agreed to and resolved upon by the representatives of South Carolina in March, 1776, and it was therefore impossible for him without breach of this solemn obligation to give his sanction to the establishment of a different form of government. But he proceeded : If I were not restrained by an oath, I should nevertheless put a negative on the bill because it annihilates one branch of the legislature, and transfers the right of electing another branch from the General Assembly to the people, and nothing is clearer to me than that we have no lawful power to do so. For on the late dissolution of government the people, being at liberty to choose what form they pleased, agreed to one vesting an authority for making the laws by which they were bound in three branches, not to be violated or infringed, but to be preserved as a sacred deposit as that security of their lives, liberties, and properties which, after mature deliberation, they deemed it wisest to provide. The legislative authority being fixed and limited, cannot change or destroy itself without subverting the Constitution from which it is derived. The people by that Constitution, he said, delegated to us a power of making laws, not of creating legislation ; and there can be no doubt that if we have the authority to take the right of electing a legislative council from that body in which the Constitution placed it and give it to another, we may not only do the like with the right of electing members of assembly and a president, but vest the election of both the Assembly and Council in another body instead of the people, and the election of a president in some other body than the council and assembly ; if we have the power to lop off one branch of the legislature, we may cut off either of the other branches and suffer the legislative authority to be exercised by the remaining

branch only, or abolish the third also, and invest the whole authority in some other person or body. Then after arguing from experience that it was not chimerical that such infractions might be attempted, he comes to another more serious objection : —

“Supposing, however,” he continues, “that we had power to form a new constitution, I apprehend that the causes assigned for it are altogether insufficient. The bill recites that the present constitution was temporary only, and suited to the situation of public affairs when it was resolved on looking forward to an accommodation with Great Britain, an event then desired. But that the united colonies have since been constituted independent States by the declaration of the honorable Continental Congress, and it is therefore become absolutely necessary to frame a constitution suited to that great event. Admitting our form of government to be temporary, it is to continue until that accommodation shall take place, until peace between Great Britain and America shall be concluded, though I do not hold that it must then be altered, and I think should not unless a better can be devised. *We still look forward to such an accommodation, an event as desirable now as it ever was, so that the situation of public affairs is in this respect the same as when the constitution was established; and though indeed since the Declaration of Independence the style of this country is somewhat altered, having been heretofore one of the united colonies, and being now one of the United States of America, yet it exercised, and constitutionally, the same supreme power before as it has since that period. Such declaration therefore cannot make it necessary to change the form of government nor can I conceive any reason which does.* The good of the people,” continued President Rutledge, “being the end of government, that is the best form under which they are happiest, they being the fittest judges of what would be most productive of their happiness, preferred the present mode of electing a legislative council to that which is offered for electing a senate, probably because it appeared more likely that persons of the greatest integrity, learning, and abilities would be chosen by and from amongst their representatives when assembled, than by electors in their several parishes and districts, and it may have seemed incongruous that there should be two representative bodies, the less controlling the greater. The people also preferred a compounded or mixed government to a simple democracy, or one verging toward it, perhaps because

however unexceptionable democratic power may appear at first view, its effects have been found arbitrary, severe, and destructive. Certain it is that systems which in theory have been much admired on trial have not succeeded, and that projects and experiments relative to government are of all schemes the most dangerous and fatal. The people having adopted such a constitution as seemed to them the most perfect, when it is not even surmised that any grievance or inconvenience has arisen from it, and where they are satisfied with and happy under it (which I firmly believe they are), if we had authority I should conceive it neither politic, expedient, nor justifiable to change this form for another, especially as I think the one proposed will not be better than or so good as what we now enjoy; and whether it would or not is a speculative point which time only can determine."

President Rutledge closed the speech with saying he was not vain enough to imagine that what he had said could influence the minds of the Assembly in a matter which had been so lately the subject of debate, and having delivered his sentiments with candor he thought it proper to resign the office of President.¹

The resignation of President Rutledge was unexpected, and threw the Assembly into great confusion. That body, however, immediately referred the speech to a committee of which Rawlins Lowndes was chairman, a majority of which resolved to report resolutions drawn by Rawlins Lowndes, declaring it to be the opinion of the committee that nothing contained in the temporary constitution passed on the 26th of March, 1776, should be construed to constrain or prohibit the legislature from making any amendments or alterations to it. But on the contrary from the very nature of that constitution being "a temporary" regulation of the internal policy of the State it became absolutely necessary to revive and improve it. That the oath of office taken by the President could oblige him no longer

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. I, 132, 138.

to maintain the Constitution to which it referred than until the legislature thought proper to alter it, otherwise what the legislature intended as a temporary regulation might be rendered perpetual and an unalterable law. The bill for establishing the Constitution of the State presented to the President the day before, and rejected by him, was calculated to render the Constitution of the country more perfect and unexceptional, and to give stability and permanence thereto; that the fact of the President refusing his assent to a bill of such magnitude which had for many months almost wholly engrossed the attention of both Houses and the public, afforded incontrovertible proof of the wisdom, necessity, and propriety of taking away in the future this veto power. The committee finally declared it their opinion that in consequence of the President having resigned, that the House together with the Legislative Council should proceed to the election of another officer to fill the vacancy "agreeable to the spirit of the Constitution of March 6, 1778." But now arose the question how could that be done if the Constitution of March 6, 1778, had not yet been adopted? The committee of the House by a majority vote adopted these resolutions but it was deemed necessary to obtain a conference with the Legislative Council on the subject, and as the time was pressing to end the anarchy between the two constitutions. The conference only came to three general resolutions, viz. (1) That the President had a right to resign; (2) that his resignation should be accepted; (3) that a new President should be elected the next day. These were adopted by both Houses.¹ An election was thereupon had, and Arthur Middleton was chosen; but he, too, was unwilling to approve the new Constitution, and declined. A second election was then had, and Rawlin

¹ MS. volume of Christopher Gadsden, entitled *So. Ca. Miscellan.*

Lowndes was elected and accepted, and on the 19th approved it.¹

On the 11th of March a motion was made in the General Assembly that the thanks of the House be presented to John Rutledge, Esq., late President of the State, for his vigilant and faithful discharge of the duties of that important station, and that the Speaker be desired to signify the same by letter. But this compliment was not allowed to pass unchallenged. It was opposed, and some time was spent in debate upon it, when the previous question was moved; and upon this, viz.: "Whether the question should now be put?" the House divided tellers; for the yeas, Captain Ladson, for the nays Captain Sanders. The yeas went forth 57, the nays 26. The main question, viz.: "That the thanks of this House be given to John Rutledge, Esq., late President of the State," then being put, the House again divided; the tellers on this question were for the yeas Colonel C. C. Pinckney, for the nays Hon. Mr. Edwards. The yeas went forth 68, the nays 15. A motion was then made that the vote of thanks to the President be amended by inserting at the end the following words: "from the commencement of his administration to the time of his resignation." The resolution was thus made to read:—

"Resolved unanimously that the thanks of the House be given to John Rutledge, Esq., late President of the State, for the vigilant and faithful discharge of the duties of that important station from the commencement of his administration to the time of his resigning the same; and that the Speaker do signify the same to him by letter."

General Gadsden adds a note in his manuscript account of these proceedings:—

"N.B. Colonel Pinckney, Sen'r, moved this last amendment, seconded by C. G., intending thereby to except from the thanks the late Presi-

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, March 12, 1778; *Ramsay's Revolution*, vol. I, 138.

dent's last act, that of an approbation to the speech rejecting the constitution."

It is proverbial that politics makes strange companions. Here was presented a striking instance, in which Rawlin Lowndes and Charles Pinckney, two leading conservatives, were acting with Christopher Gadsden, the extremist, to overthrow the influence of the Rutledges. But the year before Richard Hutson had written to Isaac Hayne that Messrs. Lowndes and Pinckney had thrown off the mask, and argued strongly for having the church continued upon its former footing: now they were supporting Gadsden in the adoption of a constitution which would disestablish it. John Rutledge could afford generously to overlook this curtailment of the words of the compliment when he saw the report of the tellers on the main question. President or not, he was still the leader of the people of South Carolina.

But John Rutledge's position, however strong in itself, was certainly inconsistent with that of his speech upon the opening of the session. He had then urged the Assembly to continue their opposition to the Crown until it relinquished all hopes of revenue and conquest and agreed to a peace which would secure the sovereignty and independence of America. Now he was telling the Assembly that he still looked forward to an accommodation with Great Britain as desirable as it ever was. It is almost amusing to observe the gravity with which he speaks of the Constitution of 1776 as emanating from the people when we recollect how it was adopted against Rawlin Lowndes's protest by a body which was in no sense a free and full representation of the people, but was little more than a self-constituted one. Then, too, as we have before pointed out, John Rutledge had by assenting to the ordinance for establishing an oath of abjuration and alle

giance, admitted the right of the Assembly to amend the Constitution. The truth, however, no doubt was, that at heart Rutledge did not wish to see the door closed to a reconciliation with the mother country, and that these innovations, the disestablishing the church and setting up a pure democracy, still more alarmed him as to the ultimate results of a final separation from Great Britain. His position was, no doubt, that of a large part of the planters and merchants of Carolina. They had gone into resistance against the principle of taxation without representation, but without any idea of separation from England, and many, very many of them, would have ridden with him to Philadelphia, as he had offered to do when Gadsden two years ago first announced the idea, to protest against it; and now that they found the movement culminating in setting aside the church from the government, and setting up a democracy pure and simple, their hearts turned again with longing to the mother country, and, to them, her good old ways. As has been observed by a writer upon this subject, all, both Whigs and Tories, were born and had grown up under a monarchy, and the abstract question of renouncing or continuing it was one upon which men of undoubted patriotism differed widely. Very many of the Whigs came into the final measure of separation with great reluctance and doubt, and hesitation prevailed even in the Continental Congress.¹ This was especially true of South Carolina.

But if the conduct of John Rutledge was inconsistent, that of Rawlins Lowndes was still more so. He had been the most conservative of all the leaders of the Revolution. His prudence had provoked the impatience and satire of Arthur Middleton and William Henry Drayton, who, in 1775, had dubbed him the great "Procrastinator." He

¹ *The Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 67.

had vigorously protested against the Constitution of 1776, and had been shocked at Christopher Gadsden's readiness to agree to a separation from England ; but a year before he had with Charles Pinckney opposed the disestablishment of the church, the first step toward the new Constitution. And yet now we find him with Christopher Gadsden advocating its adoption, drawing the resolution to override Rutledge's veto of it, and accepting the Presidency resigned by Rutledge and declined by Middleton, because it closed the door to a reconciliation with the mother country. He, the conservative of conservatives, accepts the Presidency to set in motion the new condition of things : the abjuration of the King, the disestablishment of the church, and the institution of a pure democracy. Of this curious condition of things we have no explanation. The destruction of John Rutledge's papers, the burning of Crowfield, the family seat of Lowndes, with all of his, and the loss of records in the two invasions of South Carolina precludes the historian from any satisfactory solution of this, among other interesting questions, which must now remain forever in doubt.¹

Christopher Gadsden, however, was not satisfied. He had carried the Constitution, it is true, against John Rutledge. But he felt that John Rutledge's power was still great, that he was still the strongest man in the State, and he was very indignant at being made Vice President under Lowndes, whom he had made President. Just before the adjournment of the House Colonel James Parsons had been elected Vice President, but he had declined on

¹ In his speech against the adoption of the Constitution of the United States in the Legislature of the State Mr. Lowndes said : " He was very much originally against a declaration of independency ; he also opposed the instalment law, but when they received the approbation of the people it became his duty as a good citizen to promote their due observance." Elliot's *Debates*, vol. IV, 297.

account of the state of his health, and thereupon Christopher Gadsden had been elected. But so far from esteeming this an honor, he regarded it as a device of his enemies to get rid of him. He writes to Drayton then in the Continental Congress on the 1st of June : ¹—

"I find by y^r direction that you knew the House had dubbed me Vice Presid^t. This was done the *last hour* of their sitting by the plentitude of the wanton power of a *bare House*. Parsons was excused on acc^t of his ill health, & I at that time full as bad, & that they knew, forced into his place, I saw plainly their views, but coul^d not avoid accept'g without throwing the state into confusion. But this I did not do without letting them know I plainly perceived their motive. To get rid of me at the next meeting, & to make me ineligible at the next election."

But however much Christopher Gadsden may have chafed at this second place into which he was put, and correctly or otherwise attributed it to a political manœuvre, he loyally supported Rawlins Lowndes in the difficult position in which he was placed, to inaugurate a new government in the face of an opposition which was really in the majority. For the people wanted John Rutledge with whatever constitution they had. He had resigned the Presidency, but he had lost none of his strength. Whether Gadsden was right or wrong in the motives he attributed to his own election as Vice President, the result was that on the 3d of April John Rutledge was at once returned as a member of the Assembly from Charlestown in the place of Gadsden who, in accepting that office, had thus made room for him. John Rutledge was too wise to sulk from affairs because of his defeat, and we shall soon see him elected the first Governor under the Constitution which he now had vetoed, and which Gadsden and Lowndes had carried over his veto.

¹ MS. volume of Christopher Gadsden, entitled *So. Ca. Miscellan.*

CHAPTER XII

1778

WE must now recur to the effects which the surrender of Burgoyne had produced in Europe. The greatest expectations had been entertained in Great Britain from his expedition, and the fall of Ticonderoga and his rapid and splendid success in its first stages had promised their fulfilment. A junction of his army from Canada, with that of Sir Henry Clinton at New York, was confidently expected, and it was hoped that by their junction a decisive blow would be given to the rebellion by cutting off New England, its seat, as it was believed, from the other colonies. The disappointment of the British nation at large, at its failure, and the total loss of the army, was great; but that of the government was still greater, and in a fit of despondency the ministry determined to give up everything for which they had originally contended. On the 10th of December, a few days after the surrender of Burgoyne had been announced, when Parliament was about to adjourn for Christmas, Lord North announced that at the close of the holidays he would bring in a project for conciliation, and accordingly in February he introduced two bills which were passed through both Houses of Parliament, and received the Royal assent on the 11th of March. By the first of these the duty on tea imported into America, which was the cause of dispute, was repealed, and declaration was made that the King and Parliament would not in future impose any tax or duty whatsoever payable in his colonies, except only such as should be

necessary for the regulation of trade, and in such case that the net proceeds should be applied to the use of the colony in which it should be collected under the authority of the assemblies. By the other of these acts authority was given to the King to appoint commissioners with full power to treat, consult, and agree with any assemblies of men whatsoever in America, and even with individuals, concerning any grievances existing in the government of any of the colonies or in the laws of Great Britain extending to them, with a proviso, however, that such an agreement should not be binding until ratified by Parliament—a proviso which may have been necessary on the part of the ministry, but which made the offers of the commissioners merely tentative and experimental and not binding on their principal—an objection which was at once seized upon by those in America who were not disposed to listen to overtures of any kind. The commissioners were, however, vested with absolute power in their discretion to proclaim a cessation of hostilities by sea and land; for opening an intercourse with the mother country; for suspending the operation of all acts of Parliament relating to the North American colonies passed since the 10th of February, 1763; and for granting pardons to all descriptions of persons. Well for England would it have been had these acts been passed by Parliament when first suggested by Lord Barrington on the part of the ministry, rather than that of the 21st of December, 1775, declaring the colonies in rebellion and outlawing the people. It was too late now that the sword had been drawn to make such an appeal, especially so, following a great disaster to the King's armies. Nevertheless had these measures been taken before the question had been made upon the adoption of a new constitution in South Carolina, closing the door to a reconciliation, it is not improbable that John

Rutledge's protest would have prevailed. As it was, they doubtless greatly diminished the strength of the Revolutionary party, and had a most serious effect upon the course of events in the State. The people of South Carolina, with the exception of a few extreme men, had now gained all that they demanded or desired. What was left unyielded was just what they did not desire—separation and independence.

But France had been watching the tide of affairs alike in England and America; and with love for neither, she was determined to weaken her ancient adversary by preventing a reconciliation between the mother country and her colonies. The intention of the Court of Versailles doubtless was to encourage the American colonists in their revolt by secret assurance of assistance, while abstaining from an open declaration or recognition of them until Great Britain and her colonies had mutually weakened each other. The surrender of Burgoyne, and the anticipated action of Great Britain looking to conciliation, forced the French court to throw off the mask and to act at once. As early as the 24th of December, 1777, treaties with the Americans were agreed upon; but they were not formally signed till the 6th of February following.

In the beginning of March the Duke of Grafton informed the House of Peers that he had received well-attested intelligence that a treaty was concluded and actually signed between France and America, and demanded from the ministers either an acknowledgment or denial of so important a matter. The ministers denied that they had any account of such an alliance having been formed or even intended; but within a week after this declaration a message was sent to each House of Parliament with the information that his Majesty had been

informed by the French King that a treaty of amity and commerce had been signed by the Court of France and certain persons employed by his Majesty's revolted subjects in North America, and that his Majesty had thought proper in consequence to send orders to his minister to withdraw from that court.¹ It was soon after this that the memorable scene of Chatham's dying speech took place in the House of Lords. He had but a short time before, — the day after Lord North had announced his intention of bringing in a bill of conciliatory measures, — when the attitude of the French was yet unknown, made one of his greatest speeches on the subject. Though now a complete invalid, he had several times during the last few months spoken in the House of Lords with little less than his old eloquence. America, he emphatically and repeatedly maintained, never could be subdued by force ; the continued attempt would only lead to utter ruin, and France would sooner or later inevitably throw herself into the contest. He strongly maintained, however, that England and America must remain united for the benefit of both, and that though every week which passed made it more difficult, and though the language of the ministers, and especially the employment of Indians, had enormously aggravated the situation, it was still possible by a frank and speedy surrender of all the constitutional questions in dispute, and by an immediate withdrawal of the invading army, to conciliate the colonies. "All the Middle and Southern colonies," he maintained, "are still sound . . . still sensible of their real interests." The security and permanent prosperity of both countries could only be attained by union, and by that alone the power of France could be repressed. Prompt, conciliatory action was however necessary, and he accordingly strenuously op-

¹ Bisset's *Reign of George III*, vol. III, 32.

posed the adjournment over the holidays which left the country without a parliament in the six critical weeks that followed the arrival of the news of the capitulation of Saratoga.¹ His counsel was rejected, and Parliament took a recess. By the time Parliament reconvened the sands of his life had nearly run. But now that it was known that France had concluded a treaty with the colonies, and in the face of this the Marquis of Rockingham and his party were advocating the withdrawal of the armies from America and an immediate recognition of the independence of the colonies, he made one mighty effort to preserve the integrity of the empire of Great Britain. Richly dressed in a superb suit of black velvet, with a full wig, and covered up to the knees in flannel, supported on crutches, he was led into the House of Peers attended by his son-in-law Lord Mahon, and resting on the arm of his younger son William Pitt, who was destined in a few years to rival his father's fame. He was pale and emaciated, but the darting quickness, force, and animation of his eyes and the expression of his whole countenance showed that his mind retained its perspicacity, brilliancy, and strength. The Lords stood up and made a lane for him to pass through to the bench of the Earls, and with the gracefulness of deportment for which he was so eminently distinguished, he bowed to them as he proceeded. Having taken his seat, he listened, we are told, with profound attention to the speech of the Duke of Richmond, the most vehement supporter of the necessity of admitting the independence of America; then rising, he lamented, he said, that at so important a crisis his bodily infirmities had interfered so often with his regular attendance on his duty in Parliament. Then proceeding: —

¹ *England in the Eighteenth Century* (Lecky), vol. IV, 80.

"I have this day," said he, "made an effort beyond the powers of my constitution to come down to the house, perhaps the last time I shall enter its walls, to express my indignation against the proposition of yielding the sovereignty of America. My Lords, I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me, that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this noble and ancient monarchy. Pressed down as I am by the load of infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, my Lords, while I have sense and memory, I never will tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions. Shall a people so lately the terror of the world now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon? It is impossible. I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom; but I trust it has still sufficient to maintain its just rights, though I know them not; and any state, my Lords, is better than despair. Let us at least make one effort; and if we must fall, let us fall like men."

The Duke of Richmond declared his grief and horror at the dismemberment of the empire to be as great as that of any man in the House or nation; but how was it to be avoided? He himself was totally ignorant of the means of resisting with success the combination of America with France and Spain. He did not know how to preserve the dependence of America. If any man could prevent such an evil, Lord Chatham was the man; but what, he asked, were the means that great statesman would propose? Lord Chatham, agitated by this appeal, made an eager effort at its conclusion to rise, but before he could utter a word, pressing his hand to his heart, he fell down in a convulsive fit. The Duke of Cumberland and Lord Temple who were nearest him caught him in their arms. He was carried to an adjoining apartment, where medical assistance soon arrived. Recovering, he was taken in a litter to his villa in Kent, and there he lingered till the 11th of May, when he breathed his last in the seventieth year of his age.¹

¹ Bisset's *Reign of George III*, vol. III, 40-42.

It has been no digression from the history of South Carolina to recall this great and tragic scene, for it was as much a part of her history as that of England. Chatham was the leader of politics in South Carolina as of the great Whig party in Great Britain. It was by his advice to resist taxation without representation even with their lives and fortunes that many, if not most of those who had gone into the war, had followed. It was with his approval that they were acting, and with that approval they were assured they were but exercising their rights as Englishmen. They had acquiesced, it is true, in the Declaration of Independence as a war measure, but that they would gladly give up if only an accommodation, an honorable accommodation, could be had with the mother country. And it was upon his great strength which they in a great measure depended to secure for them this settlement—an accommodation against which neither Middleton, who had signed the Declaration of Independence, nor Rutledge, who had approvingly announced it to the General Assembly, would now close the door. All this the people felt as, day by day, they passed and repassed his statue standing at the intersection of the two great thoroughfares of the town with outstretched arms demanding their rights.¹ But now he was dead, and had died protesting against the dismemberment of the ancient and noble monarchy, that is, against their separation from the dominion of England. This protest sank deep into the hearts of many a Carolinian.

But there was another point in this dying appeal of their great leader which touched them as deeply and as keenly, and this was his allusion to the House of Bourbon, for whose benefit they were now to abandon the mother

¹ See account of the raising of the statue. *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 677-678.

country. To the Carolinian of English descent, there was the inborn hatred and antipathy to the French. To the Huguenots, there was the same feeling of unkindness and resentment to France as that which the New Englanders entertained to old England. Both had been driven from their native country by persecution. But to the Carolinian, whether of English or Huguenot descent, there was superadded to these naturally hostile sentiments a deadly hatred and fear of the French as their own mortal enemy on the frontier, from the settlement of the colony to the peace of 1763. Fifteen years was all too short a time to forget the Indian atrocities which had been instigated by the French. It was the French and Spaniards who had invaded the town in 1706, and it was the French whose influence had brought on the Cherokee war in 1760 and the massacre of the Calhouns at Long Canes. It was against the French and Indians in the Cherokee war that Laurens and Moultrie and Marion, under the British ensign, had learned their first lessons in war, and now they were to march with the tricolor against the flag of St. George! The leaders and statesmen might persuade themselves to this upon grounds of policy, but the presence of French vessels in Charlestown harbor was to show how unpopular was the alliance.

On the 21st of April, 1778, Congress then sitting at Yorktown, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia being then in the possession of the British, received a letter from General Washington enclosing a printed paper from Philadelphia purporting to be copies of the three conciliatory acts which had been passed by Parliament. These papers were at once referred to a committee, which reported upon them the next day, declaring that the committee could not ascertain whether the contents of the paper which had been referred to them had been framed in Philadelphia or

in Great Britain. But they were inclined to believe that they were genuine, for various reasons which they allege, and from which it appeared to the committee that the bills introduced in Parliament were intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of the States so as to create divisions among them and a defection from the common cause now by the blessing of Divine Providence drawing near a favorable issue. Upon which the committee reported it as their opinion that as the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest for the defence of common rights and privileges, which union had been cemented by common calamities and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend and in which all mankind are interested must derive its success from the continuance of that union, wherefore any man or body of men who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with the commissioners under the Crown of Great Britain or any of them ought to be treated as open and avowed enemies of these United States. And the committee further reported it as their opinion that the United States could not with propriety hold any conference with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain unless they should as preliminary thereto either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else in positive and express terms acknowledge the independence of the States. They recommended that the States should be called upon to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the States should be held in readiness to act as occasion might require. This report was unanimously agreed to, and was published.

The door was thus closed to the commissioners before

they had sailed from England. The representatives in Congress from South Carolina at the time were Henry Laurens, Thomas Heyward, Jr., John Mathews, William Henry Drayton, and Richard Hutson. Henry Laurens was the President of Congress. Thus while John Rutledge and Arthur Middleton were refusing to adopt the Constitution which they thought put an end to the hope of reconciliation, Laurens and the other representative from the State in Congress were refusing to receive overtures from England.

The *South Carolina Gazette* of the 21st of May announced that it had been favored with Lord North's speech, introducing his new conciliatory measures with the report of the committee of Congress on the bill which would be published in an extra the next day. The extra accordingly appeared containing the conciliatory acts, Lord North's speech and the report of the committee, with this appropriate quotation from Edmund Burke's oration of March, 1775, as head-line : —

"Conciliation failing, force remains ; force failing, there is no further hope of conciliation. Power and authority may indeed be bought by kindness ; but they cannot be begged as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence."

On May 26 the *Gazette* further announced that his Excellency the President had received an important dispatch which was communicated to be published, to wit : that on Saturday, May 2d, Silas Deane had arrived at Congress, express from the American plenipotentiaries at the court of France, and had delivered his dispatches to his Excellency the President. These dispatches contained the treaties of alliance which had been formally signed on the 6th of February, whereby it had been agreed that if war should break out between France and Great Britain

during the present war between the United States and England, that France and the United States should make it a common cause, and aid each other mutually with their good offices, their counsels, and their forces; that the essential and direct end of the alliance was to maintain the liberty, sovereignty, and independence, absolute and unlimited, of the United States, and that each of the contracting parties would make all efforts in its power to attain this end. It was expressly stipulated that neither of the two parties should conclude either a truce or peace with Great Britain without the formal consent of the other first obtained; and they mutually engaged not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States should be formally or tacitly assured.

The conciliatory acts having been passed by the British Parliament, Lord Carlisle, William Eden, and George Johnstone, Esq., were appointed commissioners under the great seal, and with the Admiral Lord Howe and his brother the General, Sir William Howe, or in the absence of the latter Sir Henry Clinton, were intrusted with the execution of the powers for settling the differences between the mother country and her colonies. Of these the two first were very little known in politics, but after the Declaration of Independence Lord Carlisle had moved the address in answer to the royal speech which denounced the Americans as rebels and traitors, while Eden had been under secretary to Lord Suffolk, the most vehement advocate of the employment of the Indians in the war. Johnstone had been a former Governor of Florida, and was well known and highly esteemed in America, and had been opposed to the ministerial measures relating to the colonies. These commissioners sailed for America on the 22d of April, but Silas Deane had arrived before them and had obtained two days after reaching Congress, to

wit : on the 4th of May, the unanimous ratification of the treaties with France which he had brought. The French ambassador at London had before the British commissioners sailed notified the court of St. James of the engagements entered into between his sovereign and the American colonies, and some days after quitted London and returned to France, and about the same time the British ambassador quitted France ; though war was not actually declared, both kingdoms vigorously prepared for hostilities.

It was under such discouraging circumstances that the commissioners found themselves upon their arrival in America, but they nevertheless entered upon the execution of their offices with apparent alacrity. They dispatched their secretary Dr. Adam Ferguson, a distinguished philosopher and historian, to Yorktown, Pennsylvania, where the Congress was sitting, to lay before that body a copy of their commission with the conciliatory acts of Parliament upon which it was founded ; and a letter explaining the extent of their powers and setting forth in detail the nature of the terms which they were authorized to offer, and asking Congress to appoint a place where the commissioners might meet them either collectively or by deputation for the further discussion of the subject. Dr. Ferguson was, however, denied a passport and was not suffered to proceed any farther than the first outpost of the American army. He thereupon returned to Philadelphia, and that no delay might ensue the papers, of which he was intended to have been the bearer, were forwarded to Congress by letter by the ordinary military posts, and reached Yorktown on the 13th of June.

In this letter the commissioners declared that they were prepared to consent to a cessation of hostilities both by sea and land ; to restore free intercourse, to revive mutual affection, and renew the common benefits of natu-

ralization through the several parts of the empire ; to extend every freedom to trade that our respective interests can require ; to agree that no military forces should be kept up in the different States of North America without the consent of the general Congress or provincial assemblies ; to concur in measures calculated to discharge the debts of America, and to raise the credit and value of the paper circulation ; to perpetuate the union of Great Britain and the colonies by reciprocal deputation of agent or agents from the different States who should have the privilege of a seat and voice in Great Britain, or if sent from Britain to have a seat and voice in the assemblies of the different States, to which they may be deputed respectively in order to attend the several interests of those to whom they are deputed.

In short, the commissioners proposed, they said, to establish the power of the respective legislatures in each particular State, to settle its revenue, its civil and military establishment, and to exercise a perfect freedom of legislation and internal government, so that the British States throughout North America, acting with the people of Great Britain in peace and war under one common sovereign, may have the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege that is short of a total separation of interests, or consistent with that union of force on which the safety of our common religion and liberty depends.

The commissioners proceeded to say : —

“In our anxiety for preserving those sacred and essential interests, we cannot help taking notice of the insidious interposition of a power which has from the first settlement of these colonies been actuated with enmity to us both. And notwithstanding the pretended date or present form of the French offers to North America, yet it is notorious that these were made in consequence of the plans of accommodation previously concerted in Great Britain, and with a view to prevent our reconciliation and to prolong the destructive war.”

The commissioners then went so far as to make this appeal : —

"But we trust that the inhabitants of North America connected with us by the nearest ties of consanguinity—speaking the same language, interested in the preservation of similar institutions, remembering the former happy intercourse of good offices, and forgetting recent animosities—will shrink from the thought of becoming an accession of force to our late mutual enemy and will prefer a firm, free, and perpetual coalition with the parent State to an insincere and unnatural foreign alliance."¹

To this letter Henry Laurens, who was now President of the Continental Congress, made answer on the 17th of June, signed by him upon the unanimous voice of that body, that nothing but an earnest desire to spare the further effusion of human blood could have induced them to read a paper containing expressions so disrespectful to his most Christian Majesty, the good and great ally of these States ; or to consider propositions so derogatory to the honor of an independent nation. The acts of the British Parliament, the commission from their sovereign, and their letter suppose the people of these States to be subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, and are founded on the idea of dependence, which was utterly inadmissible.

"I am further directed to inform your Excellencies," Mr. Laurens continued, "that Congress are inclined to peace, notwithstanding the unjust claims from which their war originated, and the savage manner in which it hath been conducted. They will, therefore, be ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting when the King of Great Britain shall demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose. The only solid proof of this disposition will be an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of these States or the withdrawing his fleet and armies."²

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. I, 395-400.

² *Ibid.*, 402.

This answer would seem to have closed the door to any further negotiation ; but the commissioners, nevertheless thought it necessary to reply to show that the failure of their mission was not in any way attributable to them. In their reply they stated that the last alternative, that of withdrawing the British fleets and armies, was inadmissible not only for the sake of guarding against the design of the natural enemy of Great Britain, but for the safety of those who in America had taken an active part in favor of the mother country. But with respect to the first of the alternatives, they declared that if Congress by the independence of America meant no more than the entire privilege of the people of the continent to govern themselves without any reference to Great Britain, beyond what was necessary to preserve a union of force for the safety of the whole empire, such an independence had been already acknowledged in the first letter of the commissioners. But Congress took no further notice of this second letter than barely to enter a resolution upon their journal, importing that no answer should be given to it, as neither of the preliminary conditions — that of an explicit acknowledgment of independence and withdrawal of fleet and armies — had been complied with.

Later, on the 7th of August, the commissioners sent in a remonstrance against what the British claimed was a violation on the part of the Americans of the terms of Burgoyne's surrender ; but Congress, instead of answer to this, transmitted to them a remonstrance on the conduct of Governor Johnstone, accompanied with a declaration that it was incompatible with the honor of Congress to hold any further communication with him. This charge was founded on letters written by Governor Johnstone to individual members of Congress, with some of whom he was personally acquainted, and for others of whom he had

received letters of introduction from their friends in England. There is no doubt that Governor Johnstone, who had been a strenuous advocate in Parliament for the rights originally claimed by the Americans, in his anxiety to induce the Americans to accept the terms which he had been sent to offer, which he believed abundant to secure their liberty, peace, and happiness more extensively than those originally claimed by them, and with which, indeed, he asserted that Dr. Franklin had, on the 28th of March before, declared himself perfectly satisfied as beneficial to North America and as such should be accepted, had been very indiscreet in his suggestions. And although the charge that he had actually offered a bribe to Colonel Read is not borne out by the letter which he wrote, yet he certainly did hold out both honors and rewards to those who should be instrumental in restoring the union of England and the colonies, and putting an end to the horrors and devastations of the war.¹

Two of these letters to individuals were written to members of Congress from South Carolina. To Henry Laurens upon the introduction of a friend of his in England he wrote : —

"If you should follow the example of Britain in the hour of her insolence and send us back without a hearing, I shall hope from your private friendship that I may be permitted to see the country and the worthy characters she has exhibited to the world upon making the request in any way you may point out."

Mr. Laurens in a very admirable and dignified letter replied that it was for Great Britain to determine whether her commissioners should return unheard or revive a friendship with the citizens at large or remain among them as long as they pleased. You are undoubtedly acquainted, Mr. Laurens wrote, with the only terms upon

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 50-52.

which Congress can treat for accomplishing this good end — terms from which, writing altogether in a private character, I may venture to assert with great assurance they will never recede. Congress, he asserted, in no hour had been haughty; but to suppose that their minds were less firm in the present than they were when destitute of all foreign aid, and even without expectation of an alliance, when upon a day of general public fasting and humiliation in the house of worship and in the presence of God they resolved “to hold no conference or treaty with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain unless they should, as a preliminary, either withdraw the fleets and armies or acknowledge the independence of the States” would be unnatural. At a proper time, he declared, he should think himself highly honored by contributing to render any part of the States agreeable to Governor Johnstone, but until that basis of mutual confidence was established he believed neither former private friendships nor any other considerations could influence Congress to consent that even Governor Johnstone, a gentleman who had been so devotedly esteemed in America, should see the country. He had but one voice, and that should be against it.

Mr. Drayton also made a long and elaborate reply to Governor Johnstone’s letter to him. Among others he made this very strong point. Although the commissioners and Congress, he wrote, be agreed, such agreement is of no effect till confirmed by Parliament, which is giving such an advantage to Parliament by knowing what Congress would do, and is such a disadvantage to Congress by not knowing what Parliament would confirm, that any inequality of the conditions will put a stop to accommodation.

“America,” he wrote, “is independent *de jure et de facto*.

She will maintain her status at the expense of the last drop of her blood. It is in vain to solicit what your arms were not able to compel. You are no longer in that situation. America is more competent to contend than ever she has been. Our resolution is fixed, nor do we fear 'the horrors and devastations of war.' France has acknowledged our independence; the great powers of Europe smile upon us. We rely upon ourselves and the favor of heaven. If we continue firm, we shall continue independent. Farewell."¹

To remove any obstruction to the work of the commission by his presence, Governor Johnstone, while disclaiming any intention upon his part to bribe or compel any of those to whom he had written, withdrew absolutely from it, and Congress was notified that he had done so. It is probable, however, that the commissioners would now have abandoned all attempts at negotiation but that they knew that there was still a moderate party in all the colonies which thought the terms offered by the commissioners sufficiently liberal to be accepted, and viewed with extreme concern and apprehension the new connection with France, a kingdom they had been taught to consider as proverbially faithless. Indeed, it was believed, and it was probably true, that a great section of the American people would gladly have closed the quarrel by a reconciliation on these terms.² But Congress was in the hands of the party for absolute independence. There can be little doubt that the people of South Carolina generally would gladly have accepted them. As a last effort the British commissioners published a manifesto on the 3d of October, addressed not only to the Congress, but to the members of the general assemblies or conventions of the several

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, July 30, 1778.

² *Lecky, England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. IV, 85; *Steadman's Am. War*, vol. II, 56.

colonies and all other free inhabitants of the said colonies of every rank and denomination. In the manifesto they said : —

“ It will now become the colonies in general to call to mind their own solemn appeals to Heaven in the beginning of this contest ; that they took arms only for the redress of grievances ; and that it would be their wish as well as their interest to remain forever connected with Great Britain. We again ask them whether all their grievances, real or supposed, have not been amply and fully redressed ? and we insist that the offers we have made leave nothing to be wished in point either of immediate liberty or permanent security ; if those offers are now rejected, we withdraw from the exercise of a commission with which we have in vain been honored ; the same liberality will no longer be due from Great Britain, nor can it be, either in justice or policy, expected from her.”¹

On Tuesday afternoon, October 20, 1778, a brig with a flag of truce arrived off Charlestown bar, and a naval officer on board was intrusted with several packets from the British commissioners, directed to his Excellency the President, the commander-in-chief of the forces, the legislature, clergy, and the people of the State of South Carolina. They contained the offers made to and rejected by the Continental Congress, and the manifesto of October 3d. The vessel was retained in the Road near the harbor until President Lowndes convened his Council and the leading men of the different orders of the inhabitants to whom they were addressed. Upon reading the manifesto and accompanying papers, it was unanimously resolved that—this approach was highly derogatory to Congress, to— which all such communications should be addressed, as— such conduct on the part of the commissioners was calcu— lated to sow dissensions and jealousy among the component— parts of the American confederacy. The packets were

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. I, 428.

then sent under cover to the British commissioners at New York and returned on board the brig, with orders for her to depart immediately.¹

In November the British commissioners sailed for England, and at the same time British troops embarked for the reduction of the provinces of Georgia and South Carolina.

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, October 22, 1778 ; Ramsay, *So. Ca.*, vol. I, 214.



CHAPTER XIII

1778

RAWLINS LOWNDES, the newly elected President, withstanding Gadsden's support, — nay, perhaps very on account of it, — found his position far from comfortable. The General Assembly had accepted John Rutledge's resignation, but the people were very impatient under another's rule. And this they took an early occasion to show. It will be recollected that under his administration a law or ordinance had been passed on the 13th of February 1777, establishing an oath of abjuration and allegiance to be administered to all the late officers of the King of Great Britain, and to all other persons whom the President and Council might suspect of holding principles injurious to the rights of the State. But the Assembly, having adopted the new Constitution, now took another step to make use of their power. On the 28th of March, 1778, it passed an act to oblige every free male inhabitant of the State above a certain age, to give assurance of fidelity and allegiance to the Commonwealth.¹ By this act the colonel of the regiment of militia and the captain of the company of artillery in Charlestown, within one month, and the colonels or commanding officers of militia throughout the State, within three months after the passage of the act, were requested to assemble their regiments or companies, and at their heads to take the oath themselves, and to administer the same to the commissioned officers of the regiments, who, in their turn, were to administer it to

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. I, 147.

non-commissioned officers and privates — any officer or private refusing to take the oath was to be immediately disarmed. The members of the Legislative Council and General Assembly, and all persons holding any office or place of trust or emolument, all ferrymen, pilots, and all other persons not subject to militia duty, were required within one month to take the oath before a Justice of the Peace ; and no one who refused or failed to take it could thereafter hold office, vote, sue at law or in equity, or hold or possess lands ; and after sixty days any person refusing to take the oath was incapable of exercising any profession, trade, art, or mystery, or of buying or selling or acquiring or conveying any property whatever.

So drastic a measure could not be enforced. Its very severity defeated its purpose — a legislative body based upon no popular vote or consent, a body which could scarcely make or keep a quorum for the transaction of business, and which on the day it passed this measure was so thin a house as to cause Christopher Gadsden to resent as an insult his election as Vice President by it, was in no position to disfranchise the masses of the people. The act was passed on the 28th of March, and the time now approached when its penalties must be enforced, or some way be found to avoid its consequences. This was the position, so inconsistent with all his past career and surroundings, in which Mr. Lowndes as President now found himself. Nor was he in any condition to meet and contend with these difficulties. He was sick and in bereavement. He had just lost one son and was about to lose another. In his distress he wrote to Gadsden to come to his assistance, and to transact the immediate necessary business for him ; and however reluctant Gadsden may have been to accept the position as Vice President, he was not the man to shirk responsibility, nor to desert a

friend in the hour of need. From a letter written by Gadsden to William Henry Drayton then in Congress on the 15th of June, 1778, and from another to Thomas Bee, Speaker of the House of Commons, on the 5th of October, 1778, it appears that the Continental Congress itself had intervened in the matter and had recommended an extension of the time within which the oath might be taken, and that Drayton had sent the draft of a resolution for the purpose which Gadsden had introduced in the Legislative Council and had endeavored to have it passed, but that its passage had been delayed through a variety of accidents. On the 5th of June, however, a proclamation had been prepared in the Council to extend the time, "none more pressing for it than myself," wrote Gadsden to Drayton. The proclamation was, however, scarcely in the sheriff's hands before violent opposition to it was disclosed. A meeting, or "a mob" as Gadsden called it, was assembled and a deputation was sent to the President, not only protesting against but returning to him the proclamation which they had taken from the sheriff. Gadsden was furious. He wrote to Drayton in his own peculiar style a very interesting account of what took place.¹

"It," the proclamation, "was hardly got into the sheriff's hands before some myrmidons alarmed the town, we were setting up a proclamation ag^t law going to ruin their Liberties and what not! the proclamation I believe was never read, a Deputation was sent to the President of Doc' Budd, Capt. Mouatt, Joshua Ward, and some others. His proclamation was returned to him in my presence w^h of itself is insult enough, but besides that the spokesman Mr. Ward told the President he thought the people were right, & he would lose the last Drop of Blood to support them, this I thought so high an insult that I immediately began with Ward, sarcastically applauded his Heroism & great exertion for the public good. In return he told me I was

¹ MS. volume of Christopher Gadsden, entitled *So. Ca. Miscellan.*

a madman, but first took care to sneak out of my reach, however had he not I should have done nothing more as I was prepared than what I did, laugh in his face. The President did all that man could do, but to no purpose, a meeting was called in the evening. Dr. Budd put in the chair, every press prohibited from printing the proclamation & the Magistrate deterred from granting certificates to the penitent. At this I, Don Quixotte Secundus, who never had acted the Magistrate before, gave out publicly that I would give the Oath of Fidelity & certificates to any applicants by the 10th & accordingly did to many. I was in the midst of the people where I found them chiefly a mere mob, with here & there some who ought not to have been, & I was sorry to see there & had reason to suspect *that day* much *negative* impulse. I told them I advised the measure & that they should put a Halter about my neck & hang me if they thought it wrong — that they had a constitutional remedy, they might impeach the President & Council if they acted improperly, & that they had better do that. But all to no purpose. In my opinion if they were not set on, the old Leven was at least not sorry for it, as it was echoed amongst the people, I am told, that had Mr. R—— been president nothing of this sort would have happen'd. They met again in the 10th & after some Fuss between young Perroneau of the 2^d Reg. & Dr. Budd, the latter was again placed in the chair and after a variety of & motions amongst the last to impeach Pres^t & Council they at last came to the Resolution penn'd at the Bottom of the printed proclam^t & then broke up. That Resolution I am told was penn'd by E—— R—— and is printed in Wells last paper *without the Proclam^t*. The one sent you is printed as you will see *since the 10th* as a Hand Bill & I question now whether it will be printed at all in the *Regular Gazette*, but from a different motive I am fully persuaded than that through w^{ch} it was prevented at first. That was violence & party manoeuvre. Now it will be hindered underhandedly by shame if possible."

We have given this full extract from General Gadsden's letter as not only containing an authentic account of these disturbances, but giving us a considerable insight into the condition of parties at the time. No doubt "the old Leven," as he styled the conservatives, looked on without remorse, if not with actual enjoyment, at Gadsden's dis-



comfiture in his first effort to control the element in the town which they regarded as having been encouraged, if not actually raised, by himself. They no doubt enjoyed too, if indeed they had not instigated, the cry that nothing of this kind would have happened if only John Rutledge had been President. It must, indeed, have been a bitter experience to Christopher Gadsden to find the man to whom he had been the leader and guide in all the revolutionary movements, turning away and disregarding him the moment he attempted to withstand and control their violence. It was under his lead that they had often assembled under the Liberty Tree and marched through the town, hurrahing for Wilkes and the anti-Rescinders, or met there to enforce the non-importation agreement against some luckless merchant. It was to support him against his present colleague and chief, Mr. Lowndes, that they had crowded the Exchange in July, 1774, and outvoted the Conservative party, who were already alarmed at the extremes to which he was inclined to go. It was upon them he relied when he stood in the Provincial Congress and alone assumed the responsibility of declaring in favor, not only of the liberties, but of the independence of the American colonies. During all this time and through all these events Christopher Gadsden was, and knew himself to be, a chief among his people, a leader with a compact party behind him, a power in the State. But it is the fate of every such leader that he must be ever in the advance. There is no room for pause or hesitation in his course. If he but stumble, the crowd behind with his name upon their lips, will ruthlessly trample upon him, following the next who happens to keep in the front. It was this party which, under his lead, had forced the adoption of the new Constitution, and John Rutledge had wisely stepped aside and left to him, and his

new ally, Rawlins Lowndes, the responsibility of the government they had set up. Gadsden's rôle must now all at once be changed. He had hitherto been a critic and down puller, as John Adams was in Massachusetts; now he must build up and conduct the government he had inaugurated. How differently things at once appeared to him!

On the 8th of June he writes to Peter Timothy, urging and imploring him by the past favors he had received from the State in the printing business to print fifty or a hundred copies of the proclamation in order to undeceive the misled inhabitants of Charlestown and prevent further mischief. He argues that there is not one tittle in the proclamation contrary to law, which he is persuaded will be seen by the candid and dispassionate men the moment it is published. He appeals to Timothy that its publication is necessary to the vindication of the President and Council, and that being the case he asks, "Shall the press be stopt & the only public way of vindicating public character shut up against them?" Can it, indeed, be Christopher Gadsden who wrote this?

"I court no popularity; am neither afraid nor ashamed to say *anywhere* that I advised this measure, if wrong let the people impeach us, that is the constitutional method, unless restless, flighty men of w^h. I am afraid we have too many amongst us want again to be running upon every Fancy to the meetings of liberty tree. Query whether there is not a disease amongst us far more dangerous than any thing that can arise from the whole herd of contemptible, exportable Tories."

Little could he have thought, when in 1766 he linked hands with the party under the Liberty Tree, that before the Revolution was over he would be denouncing, as worse than contemptible Tories, those who still sought the inspiration of freedom under the shade of its branches. But so it was. His day of power was passing away.

The violent would not be controlled by him, and the conservative would not accept him as a leader in the place of Rutledge. Bitterly he complains again in the letter to Timothy : —

“For my part I never wish’d for nor sought my present situation nor was I put into it from favor to me, but merely the plenitude of the wanton power of a Bare House.”

But he concludes : —

“However as I am placed in it I will do my duty therein to the best of my judgment & will be intimidated neither by the many nor few. I have administered the oath to several this morning & will to as many as call on me within the time mentioned in Proclamation, this I have publicly declared and wish it to be as publicly known as possible.”

It happened that Timothy was just about to commence the republication of his paper the *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, his press and stock having been destroyed in the great fire of the 15th of January before, and though, as he announces in his first issue of the 24th of June, that he is reduced to “begin the world anew at an advanced period of life,” having lost everything in that conflagration, he would not desert the party with whom he had been acting, and who had, as Gadsden reminded him, given him public patronage. So, unlike Wells of the *South Carolina and American General Gazette*, he did not quail before the mob, but in his first issue, which, however was after the time limited in it, published the proclamation in full.

The proclamation was very skilfully drawn. Seizing upon a resolution of the Continental Congress of the 23d of April before, which recommended to the legislatures of the several States, or to the executive authority of each State if invested with sufficient power to issue proclamation of pardon to such of the inhabitants as had levied war or adhered to or abetted the enemy, who should surrender:

themselves to any civil or military officers of the State, the proclamation citing the resolution went on to say : —

“And whereas many of the useful inhabitants of the States who from tender consciences, misapprehensions, or prejudice of former prepossession, and others from neglect, inadvertence, particular situation, or circumstances, have not yet taken the oath of fidelity to the State, prescribed by the Act of the General Assembly, passed the 28th day of March last, and are now heartily disposed and desirous to take the same, and on fuller consideration to unite with and become faithful citizens of the State. And whereas the benign and gracious intention of Congress do manifestly and necessarily include and comprehend the latter as well as the former, inasmuch as no hostile or other overt act of criminality is imputed to them. And the Legislature not now sitting, the good designs and merciful overtures of Congress may be rendered ineffectual if the Executives do not interpose to carry into execution, as far as may be, what is so well calculated to restore public peace and tranquillity in particular to the State.”

The President had, therefore, thought fit, by and with the advice of the honorable the Privy Council, to issue his proclamation, publishing this act of Congress and promising to apply to the legislature at its next meeting, and endeavor to obtain a confirmation and ratification of a general amnesty, and pardon to all those who should within the time prescribed return to the State and take the oath of fidelity as a test and evidence of their allegiance by the 10th of June.

Wells's paper, the *South Carolina and American General Gazette*, of the 11th of June, gives this account of the meeting of the 10th, to which General Gadsden refers in his letter to William Henry Drayton : —

“Yesterday afternoon at a meeting of a great number of respectable inhabitants of Charlestown, the following resolution was unanimously agreed to, and ordered to be published : —

“That an act of assembly entitled “an act to oblige every free male inhabitant of the State above a certain age, to give assurance

of meeting and allegiance to the same, & for other purposes the resolution" which had been already passed and executed, and which had been proposed in the same shall be assented to and carried out."

But notwithstanding this resolution of so respectable meeting as the *France* describes it to have been, the law was not enforced, and when the legislature met in fall it found itself compelled virtually to endorse the action of the President and Council by passing another act enlarging the time for taking the oath. The preamble thus recites that it is passed because many of the citizens of the State had through ignorance, mistake, absence or some other cause accident neglected to take it and thus become liable to its pains and penalties.¹ By the act the term of submission to the new government was practically enlarged to the spring term of the courts. It was when that time arrived the government was too busy with President's business to be enforcing oaths of allegiance.

The General Assembly upon passing this test oath had adjourned on the 1st of September. But very few members attended on that day, and it was not until the 3d that a quorum was formed.² The President writes Gadsden Drayton then made a very spirited representation of behavior of the mob in Charlestown on the 5th of July which mob he says was ostensibly on account of the proclamation, but really, as he is persuaded, "artfully stirred and set a-going by a cabal." But the House was very reluctant to meddle with the matter, and after having it before them for a month, through the influence of the town members, Gadsden says, put it off to the next House. There was nothing in the *Gazette* of the day on the subject, no speech or message of the President, nothing more than the

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. IV, 450.

² *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*.

announcement of the meeting of the Assembly. But a writer in the *Gazette* of the 24th of September, without direct mention or reference to these occurrences, presents a very plausible argument against the action of the President and Council in assuming to abrogate or avoid an act solemnly passed by the three coördinate branches of the government. He argues for an express constitutional provision upon the subject. His paper is interesting as it exhibits the steps in the development of our written constitutions as limitations upon the law-making power. He urges that the Constitution should clearly define the authority of each branch of the legislature as well as the conjoint powers of the whole. It is absolutely necessary to settle whether the power, transferred to government, is unlimited, or whether it would not be prudent to confirm it by a charter of inalienable rights. It is proper, he writes, that the privileges of each component part should be fixed, that no branch may be at liberty to arrogate to itself *ad libitum* a power superfluous to the rest. The writer, however, cannot avoid all personal allusion. He cannot altogether conceal his party spirit. "Let us not follow," he writes, "the example of those who have almost ruined themselves already, and probably will totally hereafter by their neglect of this very matter."

In the meantime, writes Gadsden to Drayton, the President and Council had to put up with the insult. He was much afraid that Mr. Lowndes would have resigned, "which would have put the State into great confusion, and would have given the party who were hopeful that officers would not have been found to set the new constitutions a-going, the utmost pleasure." But while Gadsden was thus concerned that Lowndes should submit to insult in order to despise the opposition to the new Constitution, he was not willing to do so himself. This, he tries to

explain to Drayton, was because his office was not of so much consequence and would not disorganize the government, and at the same time would rebuke the other party. He writes that as for his part as Vice President, and as a new election was so near at hand, he thought his resignation would be of little moment to the State, and that at the same time it would be of some good consequence that some part of the executive should show a feeling upon so monstrous an insult as they received. Indeed, he thought himself in a manner peculiarly called upon to do so from his station, and wrote a letter, he says, to the speaker resigning the office of Vice President, a copy of which he encloses to Drayton. A copy of this letter is in the manuscript volume before us. It is in Christopher Gadsden's own peculiar style. It is long and incoherent, and often regardless of the rules of grammar; but it is full of strong sense, of the highest honor and deepest feeling. His love for the State commingled with his sense of wrong at the indifference and disrespect with which he conceived the President and himself treated, are expressed with strength and pathos. He makes, too, a very strong point that the very existence of the State during the war then existing might, upon a sudden emergency, oblige the Privy Council to advise the President to act really the very opposite to some of the most favorite laws—a necessity which was soon to be recognized and acted upon in conferring almost dictatorial powers upon John Rutledge and his Council, in whose interest the controversy with Lowndes and Gadsden was now chiefly waged. But Gadsden must have been simple-minded indeed, when he expected, as he wrote Drayton, that his resignation would be accepted. Had he not himself recognized that he had been put in the position as a mere party manœuvre by his opponents; and could he expect them now to release him? “However,” he writes,

"I was mistaken, for they did me the honor, unanimously, to send two members to desire I wo^d continue. This I could not refuse, therefore still remain *statu quo*."

It was, as we have seen, during the early days of Lowndes's administration that the alliance with France had been formed. This alliance was far from being universally acceptable, and the latent hostility to it in South Carolina was now to be exhibited in a marked manner. As soon as the French had determined to take an active part in behalf of the revolted colonies, a fleet was equipped and dispatched to America under the Count D'Estaing. The first movement on their part in coöperation with the American forces was the joint expedition to recover possession of Rhode Island, which ended in total failure, because, as the Americans believed, of their abandonment in a critical moment by the French fleet. Indeed, Colonel John Laurens, son of Henry Laurens, who was serving with that expedition, had taken to D'Estaing, when he had announced his intention of abandoning it and sailing for Boston, a protest against the departure of the fleet as derogatory to the honor of France, destructive of the welfare of the United States, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations. The conduct of the French on this occasion caused great murmuring throughout the American continent, particularly among the people of the Northern States, who had hoped much from the expedition. In these States the clamors were loud against D'Estaing, who had deserted them in the midst of an expedition which had been undertaken only in consequence of the promise of coöperation. These murmurings were suppressed by the powers as far as they could, but they were in part the cause of a dangerous riot in Boston between the American and French seamen, in which several of the latter were wounded. A still more

serious riot of the same kind took place in Charlestown. On the 6th of September the good people of the town were alarmed by the firing of cannon and small arms. The disturbance began, it appears, with an ordinary quarrel between some sailors of the French ship *Comte de Narbonne*, lying at one of the wharves, and the landsmen, but it grew into a general fight between the French sailors and those of Carolina, in which some lives were lost and several persons wounded. There was great alarm, the militia were called out, and were under arms all night. President Lowndes issued a proclamation, offering £1000 for the apprehension of a person who was supposed to have killed one of the French sailors. He also called upon all magistrates and peace officers and all good citizens to be vigilant in suppressing tumultuous meetings and preventing riots, and to discourage and discountenance all indecent, illiberal, and national reflections against the subjects of his most Christian Majesty our great and good ally as tending to excite resentment and ill-will among those to whom by interest, treaty, and alliance we are bound as friends and who are particularly entitled to our favor. He also sent in a message to the General Assembly, which was now sitting, recommending them to prescribe regulations which might prevent such riots, which threatened very fatal consequences. Nothing further came of these disturbances, but they exhibited the hostile feeling which existed among the people against the French and this alliance.¹

There was great apathy among the people in the country generally, notwithstanding all the excitement and turmoil in the town of the last few months. The new Constitution had popularized the government in theory, but the people generally do not appear to have been zeal-

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, September 17, 1778.

ous in availing themselves of their new franchises. President Lowndes, in a message to the Assembly on the 17th of October, as it was about to adjourn, called the attention of the members to the great neglect of elections. Upon occasions of elections, he said, when so much is at stake, it was highly reprehensible, if not criminal, for any man to absent himself; no inconvenience, no private considerations, can excuse so dangerous a neglect. How astonishing, then, has been the supineness and indifference of the people in respect to elections—the corner-stone in the fabric of a free constitution! To see members of a respectable parish or district nominated by two or three of the inhabitants, and sometimes barely by the returning officer, has been a subject of regret to every lover of his country. We are now dignified by the title of Freemen; we have formed and adapted our Constitution to that character. We are the guardians and guarantees of that Constitution. Let us act under the influence of these considerations, and at the approaching elections throughout the State exhibit an example of watchfulness and independency, attention and zeal for the preservation of our liberties, that may stimulate the inhabitants at future elections and diffuse through all ranks and orders of men an emulation in the discharge of these duties.¹

The approaching election referred to by President Lowndes was the first to be held under the new Constitution, which John Rutledge had vetoed as closing the door to a reconciliation with the mother country. It took place on the last Monday in November, the 30th, and judging by the returns for Charlestown there does not seem to have been any new life infused into the councils of the State by the extended franchise and the increased representation. Indeed, from the list of those returned,

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, October 17, 1778.

it seems as if Charlestown had found it difficult to find thirty persons to represent it in the new Assembly ; or if not so, the ruling families had still retained their political influence, and that without regard to their respective positions upon the great questions at issue. In the new body — the Senate — the representatives of the town were Charles Pinckney and Henry Middleton, both elderly, conservative men, and both of whom were soon to retire from the contest. Including the Senate and House, there were four Pinckneys, — Colonel Charles Pinckney and his son, Charles Pinckney, Jr., Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and his brother Thomas. The three Rutledges, John, Hugh, and Edward, and their brother-in-law, Roger Smith. The two Middletons, Henry and Arthur, father and son. The two Laurenses, Henry and John, father and son. Two Hugers, brothers, Daniel and Isaac. Henry Laurens and William Henry Drayton, though members serving in Congress, were chosen as representatives in the Assembly. Christopher Gadsden and William Henry Drayton, the extreme Revolutionists, and John Rutledge, who was seeking reconciliation, were alike chosen. Daniel Cannon and William Johnson were also elected. In looking over the list of representatives chosen at this election, and recollecting the part they had played and the various and opposing views they had expressed and acted upon, we cannot believe that their choice was the result of any general election or action on the part of the people. It must have been the result of some arrangement by which all those who had taken any part in public affairs up to this time were returned, regardless of what was their position upon the great issue at stake. Neither party perhaps felt strong enough to make an issue with the other.

The Assembly met on the first Monday in January, 1779,

whereupon Rawlins Lowndes, the President under the former Constitution, who was, no doubt, rejoiced to be relieved from his anomalous position, addressed the body in a message, in which he told them that the choice of officers to fill the various offices of State under the new Constitution was their most important business, and as their affairs would now, in all probability, be conducted more by arms than councils, and their success, in a great manner, depend upon military ability and experience, they should look to these qualities in the choice of a chief magistrate. To these he declared himself unfitted, and expressed the highest pleasure and satisfaction in the hope of a speedy dismissal from office. The Senate and House replied most courteously, and assured his Excellency that he underrated his abilities. But they went into an election, and John Rutledge, who had in March before vetoed the Constitution, and resigned the office of chief magistrate rather than take part in closing the door to an accommodation with England, was now recalled to be the head of the State; and being elected Governor and Commander-in-chief, under the Constitution he had refused to approve, he was proclaimed amidst the acclamation of the people, the discharge of the field-pieces of the artillery, and the volleys of infantry. Then his Excellency, attended by the Senate and House of Representatives and their officers, proceeded from the State House to the Exchange in solemn procession as of old, and was received there as Governor with every demonstration of respect.¹

Thomas Heyward, Jr., a member of Congress who was not present, was elected Lieutenant Governor; but on learning it, declined. Thomas Bee was chosen in his place.²

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, February 11, 1779.

² *Ibid.*, February 19; *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, February 24, 1779.

The Privy Council elected were Colonel Charles Pinckney, Christopher Gadsden, Roger Smith, and Thomas Ferguson for two years; John Edwards, John Neufville, Colonel Isaac Motte, and John Parker for one year.¹

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, February 19, 1779. Governor John Drayton, the son of William Henry Drayton and editor of his *Memoirs*, thus accounts for the condition of parties and the curious results of elections, the same constituency returning persons of such different political views:—

“For it must not be understood that the individuals whose names have been mentioned as leading opposition in the public councils had any other than the purest views in so doing: as every free independent citizen of this community has from the first settlement of this colony maintained his right to comment on the proceedings of the government, as affecting his liberty, his rights, and his property; and as men view occurrences through the mediums best suited to their several capacities. Besides, it must not be forgotten that the citizens of South Carolina did not lead, but followed the American Revolution. They had been mildly treated by the Royal government, and therefore did not hastily lose sight of British protection. Hence the public mind weighed how far it should support violent measures against the ancient government, and did not give way until the revolutionary troubles and revolutionary principles thence arising led them step by step to concede points as proper and patriotic which a short time before they had thought disloyal and inadvisable. For these reasons the opposition members were always kept in place, as eliciting by their opposition more prudent measures. And that their conduct in so doing was not disapproved the high public stations to which many of them were called during the most critical times of the Revolution will be the best assurance of the public approbation. In their lifetime it was their best reward, and to their posterity who now profit by their ancestors' services it will ever be a source of happy reflection — that they did not struggle for their own and their country's right in vain.” — *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 88, 89.

CHAPTER XIV

1778

THE British commissioners having failed in their embassy sailed for England in November, 1778; and about the same time an embarkation took place from New York, which was the commencement of a transfer of the war to the South. The invasion from Canada having ended in Burgoyne's defeat and capture, and the operations in the Middle States having at the end of three years failed to secure any other permanent result than the occupation of New York, the British government determined, while keeping a sufficient force before Washington and the main body of the American army, so as to prevent succor to the distant States of Georgia and South Carolina, to transfer to these States the scene of hostilities.

There were strong reasons for this course. South Carolina and Georgia produced the commodities which were most wanted in the European markets. France took an immense quantity of their staple products, and the quiet and security which they had hitherto enjoyed had allowed the cultivation of these crops to continue without interruption, so that their export trade seemed little otherwise affected by the war than what it suffered from the British cruisers. Thus in effect the American credit in Europe was principally upheld by these Southern States; and they became the medium through which the Middle States received most of the supplies that were not only indispensably necessary to the support of the war, but even to

the conducting of the common business and affairs of life.¹ From the victory of the 28th of June, 1776, Charlestown had become the storehouse of merchandise and the retreat of privateers, and into its harbor were brought their prizes for condemnation. Besides this, it was believed that a much greater proportion of the inhabitants of these provinces were still well affected to the British government than of those in the Northern. Then, from the great distance of these States from the army under Washington it was impossible for him to conduct their defence, and scarcely possible to lend them any material assistance. Moreover, Sir Henry Clinton, from New York, having command of the water, would be enabled to transport his forces to and from the South with much greater facility and in much less time than could Washington from the Jerseys. It was therefore determined to make an essay in the South and to begin with Georgia, the youngest and weakest and most loyal to Great Britain of all the colonies, which, though in itself neither great nor powerful, possessed considerable importance as a granary to the invaders, and much more so as its occupation opened the way to operations against South Carolina. These considerations determined the British, now that all hopes of reconciliation were at an end, to undertake an expedition to Georgia and to renew the struggle from that strategic point.² Let us see what were the forces in South Carolina to meet the invasion which was now shortly to come, and inquire somewhat into the military system upon which the Revolution was carried on.

The military defence of the revolted colonies was based on no general uprising of the people. There was no call for volunteers as in the war between the States in 1861;

¹ *Annual Register for 1779* (London), 29.

² *Hist. of George III* (Bisset), vol. III, 122.

nor was there any attempted levy *en masse* as in France in 1793; nor was there, nor could there be, any reliance whatsoever in the militia. A militia indeed can be depended upon only by a government which is universally recognized, and is most dangerous to one which has not the cordial support of the whole people. This fact was fully recognized by the leaders of the Revolution, and experience everywhere demonstrated its truth. Washington in his letters again and again declares that no dependence whatsoever could be put in the militia; and the same thing was repeated by the officers in South Carolina. How could it be otherwise when there was scarcely a leading family in the province which was not divided between the King and the Congress? To call out the militia was to call out perhaps as many friends of his Majesty King George the Third as of the new government, and to put arms in the hands of such was sometimes but furnishing them to the invaders. When the people would not take the trouble at such a time to go to the polls to vote under the new Constitution, it was scarcely to be expected they would turn out to fight for it.

From the commencement the theory of the Revolutionists was that of a regular army. A regular force was to be raised after the manner of the European armies; and the material sought for the rank and file was of the same description. So the Provincial Congress in 1775 determined to raise three regiments of five hundred men each, two of infantry and one of rangers, in the nature of mounted infantry. The military ardor, we are told, was so great that many more candidates presented themselves from the first families in the province as officers of the first two regiments than were wanted; but it was as officers these desired to serve—not in the rank and file. The officers were to have the pay and rations as in the British

service at the time, the soldiers one shilling sterling per day; the rangers, as they were to furnish their own horses, £20 currency. This force upon which a revolution was to be effected was thus to consist of fifteen hundred men!¹ Ramsay thinks that had America seriously intended independence from the beginning, she might in the first stage of the contest have easily recruited one hundred thousand men to serve during the war; but aiming, he says, at nothing but a redress of grievances, and flattering herself with the hopes of accomplishing this in a little time, all her schemes were of a temporary nature.² But this is begging the whole question; for it can be just as safely asserted that if independence had been avowed when it was first proposed to raise troops in South Carolina not a man would have been enlisted. Gadsden's declaration in favor of independence and separation six months afterwards was received with abhorrence.

The military system under which the Revolution was carried on was utterly inadequate and inefficient. Congress had, as early as the 15th of June, 1775, adopted the army around Boston and assumed the control of military operations. But this it will be recollected was a year before the Declaration of Independence, and the force thus adopted was designated the *Continental army*, in contradistinction to that of the British under General Gage, which was called by the Revolutionists the *Ministerial army*; few at this time desiring, and fewer still bold enough to acknowledge if they did so desire, a separation from England. This name, for want of a better, clung to the American army proper for the rest of the war. When Washington assumed command of this army, under the authority of Congress, he found it much smaller in numbers than he had been led to suppose, and an ill-con-

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, 64.

² Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 106.

ditioned and irregular force stretched out to beleaguer the town.¹ It was composed of minutemen and volunteers who had hastily assembled for a temporary service and with no idea of engaging in a long war; and as the summer passed away, and the novelty and excitement of the occasion wore off, the men became impatient of the dull service in the siege and anxious to return to their homes, nor did they often wait for leave to do so. It became necessary, therefore, to reorganize this army, and on the 15th of October, 1775, there arrived in camp a committee of Congress, sent to confer with Washington and with delegates from the government of the New England States on the subject. The committee consisted of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Lynch of South Carolina, and Colonel Harrison of Virginia. Under the report of this committee it was proposed to raise a new army of 22,270 men, to be recruited as much as possible from the troops then in actual service. But still without any purpose of a permanent separation from England or of a long war to maintain it, this force was to be enlisted but for one year. The reenlistment under this act of Congress proved a source of perplexity to Washington, who found the greatest difficulty in securing it. The troops, especially those from Connecticut, would not remain in camp long enough to allow the new recruits to be organized for their relief. Washington's letters of the time are filled with the bitterest complaints of the want of public spirit and virtue in the people. Instead of pressing to be engaged in the cause of their country, which, he writes, he had vainly flattered himself would have been the case, he found himself likely to be deserted in a most critical time.² Nor was the condition of the army improved when Boston was evacuated by the British and the battle of Long Island

¹ *Life of Washington* (Irving), vol. VI, 7.

² *Ibid.*, 87.



had taken place, and he had been compelled to retreat through the Jerseys. His enlisted men became dispirited; and the militia, dismayed, intractable, and impatient to go home, deserted in great numbers, in some instances almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time.

"All these circumstances," writes Washington to the President of Congress on the 2d of September, 1776, "fully confirms the opinion I have ever entertained, and which more than once in my letter took the liberty of mentioning to Congress, that no dependence could be put in a militia or other troops than those enlisted and embodied for a longer period than our regulations hitherto prescribed. I am persuaded, and as fully convinced as I am of any one fact that has happened, that our liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded if not entirely lost if this defence is left to any but a permanent standing army. I mean to exist during the war."¹

Washington, it will be observed, had no idea of such an organization of volunteers, neither regulars nor militia, which has, as we have before pointed out, become in a great measure the military system of the United States; an organization with which the Mexican War was, to a large extent, conducted, which was the organization on both sides in the war between the States in 1861-65, was again resorted to in the late Spanish War, and is now, under the name of yeomanry, adopted, to a considerable extent, by the British government in the war in South Africa; an organization in which men of the highest character and position may serve in the ranks from patriotism, regardless of pay; an organization which, formed by enlistment for definite periods, — sometimes for a whole war, — combines the permanence of a regular force with the superior zeal and character of the patriot. Washington's idea of a proper organization was that of a regular army in which the rank and file were to be enlisted or hired

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. IV, 72.

men—men of indifferent characters who would serve for pay, and for pay subject themselves to the subordination and rigor of military discipline without regard to the cause for which they were hired to fight. He wished, in his own language, “a permanent standing army,” and that was just what a large party of the Revolutionists were unwilling to establish, fearing that such an army might be used for setting up another monarchical government.

Thus urged, however, Congress soon after the defeat on Long Island, that is in the fall of 1776, adopted a scheme for the reorganization of the army by which 88 battalions of 680 men each were to be raised in the several States in proportion to their assumed ability severally to furnish them. Massachusetts and Virginia were each to furnish 15 battalions; Pennsylvania, 12; North Carolina, 9; Connecticut, 8; South Carolina, 6; New York and New Jersey, each 4; New Hampshire and Maryland, each 3; Rhode Island, 2; Delaware and Georgia, each 1.¹ From General Knox's report as Secretary of War, May 10, 1790, it appears that besides these the commander-in-chief was authorized to raise 16 additional regiments of infantry and 3 of artillery, also a body of cavalry of 3000 men.² This scheme should have produced a force of 75,000 men. The number General Knox reports as furnished was 34,820. A most

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. II, 456, 457; Hildreth's *Hist. of the U. S.*, vol. III, 164.

² *Am. State Papers*, Military Affairs, vol. I, 15. The report, it should be observed, was compiled seven years after the war from such returns as could then be found. It is manifestly inaccurate. There was no Executive under the Confederation, no Secretary of War. Congress undertook to manage the affairs of the army itself by Boards and Committees. The returns of the time were thus furnished by the States, and we have Washington's authority for the fact that they were unreliable. Knox's report to Congress is not a contemporaneous document. It is very certain that no such number of men as he reports were ever actually in the field. Many were only on paper.

extraordinary error, apparently originating in a statement found in the collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society, makes the number of continental troops actually furnished during the Revolution as 231,971, and the militia as 56,163, making a grand total of troops engaged in the struggle 288,134.¹ This result is brought about by adding together the number of men reported by General Knox as furnished for each of the eight years of the war as if they were different and additional men for each of the years. Whereas Knox's report itself shows that in the year 1776 all the States together reported on paper but 46,891 continental troops; in 1777 but 34,820; in 1778 but 32,899; in 1779 but 27,699; in 1780 but 21,015; in 1781 but 13,292; in 1782 but 14,256; in 1783 but 13,476; so that the largest number of continental troops returned in any year was that in 1776, in which the siege of Boston, battle of Fort Moultrie, and the battle of Long Island took place. The continental troops at first were enlisted but for six months, then for some longer periods, and some for the whole war. John Adams states that after a careful examination of the most authentic documents he was satisfied that there never was, at any time in North America, including the Canadas, more than 25,000 British troops during the war.²

¹ *Am. Almanac*, 1830, 187; 1831, 112; Niles' *Register*, July 31, 1830; *Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 31.

² Letter of December, 1800, published in the *Literary World* (New York), quoted by Simms in his *So. Ca. in the Am. Revolution*, 54.

As a matter of interest the following table is given as showing the comparative strength of the two armies, American and British, on paper, during the years 1777, 1778, 1779, 1780, 1781, and 1782. The strength of the American forces is taken from the report of General Knox as Secretary of War, made May 10, 1790, and that of the British from the returns in the State Paper Office, London, quoted in Washington's *Writings*, vol. V, 542.

American				British
1777	continentals, 34,820	militia returned, 10,100		20,957
1778	" 32,899	" " 4,353	estimated, 13,800	34,064

Mr. Sabine enlarges upon the estimate of the New Hampshire Historical Society and makes the aggregate force furnished by all the States (including continentals as 231,959, militia returned 58,747, and a conjectural estimate of militia in service 105,580) 396,286.¹ That is, about one soldier for every eight of inhabitants by the estimate of population by Congress at 3,026,678.² The case of South Carolina furnishes an illustration of the fallacies of these estimates. By that of Mr. Sabine

	American				British	
1779 continentals, 27,699	militia returned,	5,135	estimated,	12,350	38,569	
1780 " 21,015	" "	5,811	" "	16,250	33,766	
1781 " 13,292	" "	7,298	" "	8,750	33,374	
1782 " 14,256	" "		" "	3,750	42,075	

¹ The *Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 31. The inquiry naturally arises if there were so many Americans in the field where did they fight, and why did they not drive the British, who never numbered 50,000, out of the country without waiting for the assistance of France. The numbers of Americans present at the great battles of the war other than those discussed in this work were as follows: Long Island, 27,000 (Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. II, 429); Trenton and Princeton, between 5000 and 6000 (Irving's *Life of Washington*, vol. II, 469); Saratoga, continental, 9003, militia, 4129 = 14,122 (Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. III, 291 a.); Brandywine, 11,000 effective (*Ibid.*, vol. III, 141); Germantown, 8000 continentals, 3000 militia (*Ibid.*, 175); winter quarters Valley Forge, 17,000 (*Ibid.*, 375); Monmouth, 10,684 (*Ibid.*, 402); Yorktown, 6500 continentals and 3500 militia, 7000 French troops (*Ibid.*, vol. IV, 404). See this subject also discussed by Mr. Simms, under the name of Southron, in his *So. Ca. in the Rev. War*, etc. (1853), 59. It is, however, a mistake to say that there were 1000 South Carolina troops in the North. There were none. The Carolinians mentioned as being in Philadelphia were General Nash's brigade of North Carolinians.

² *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 15.

³ Lord George Germain, Minister of War, writes to Sir Henry Clinton on the 7th March, 1781: "Indeed, so contemptible is the Rebel Force now in all Parts, and so vast is Our Superiority everywhere that no resistance on their Parts is to be apprehended that can materially obstruct the Progress of the Kings arms in the Speedy Suppression of the Rebellion; and it is a pleasing tho' at the same time a mortifying reflection, when the Duration of the Rebellion is considered, which arises from the view of this Return of the Provincial Forces You have transmitted, that the American Levies in the Kings Service are more in number than the whole of the Inlisted Troops in the Service of the Congress." *Clinton- Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, 335.

the State is credited with 6600 continentals and a conjectural estimate of militia in service at 25,850, in all 32,510. But no estimate of South Carolina's population could have furnished that number. The highest estimate of the number of whites in 1775 was 75,000.¹ The census of 1790, it is true, nearly doubles that number and makes it 140,178. This is, in a great measure, explained by the multitude from abroad and from the more northern parts of America which poured into the State after the peace of 1783. So great was this influx of population that the present counties of Greenville, Pickens, and Oconee — the territory acquired from the Indians in 1777 — filled so rapidly from 1783 that in 1800 they alone contained upwards of 30,000 souls.² But this would scarcely fully account for the great difference between the former estimates and the census of 1790. The fault is probably in both the estimates and the census. The latter was the first taken in the United States, and was probably not very accurately made. It was, in fact, not completed in South Carolina until the 25th of February, 1792.³ In 1787 the population of South Carolina was estimated for representation by

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 377-507. In the war between the States in 1861-65 the State of South Carolina, however, with a white population of but 291,300, and an arms-bearing population (*i.e.* of white men between the ages of 18 and 45) in 1860 of but 55,046 (*War of the Rebellion Official Records*, Series III, vol. III, 44), put into the field 44,000 volunteers before the passage of any conscript act; and during the war 62,838 effective men, and had an enrolment of 71,083, of which 22 per cent were killed or died of disease or died in prison. *Report of the Historian of the Confederate Records to the General Assembly of So. Ca.* This was a most extraordinary uprising, but it would have been nothing in comparison to that of the Revolution if Mr. Sabine's estimate were correct.

² Mills' *Statistics*, 176.

³ S. S. Cox, art. "Census," *Supplement to Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. I, 704.

the Constitutional Convention of the United States at 150,000, including three-fifths of 80,000 negroes, that is, 102,000 whites and 80,000 negroes.¹ For want of a more reliable standard, if we accept for our present purpose the number of whites at 100,000 in 1775, instead of the highest of former estimates, 75,000, by Mr. Sabine's figures, the State would have furnished, as soldiers, one-third of its white population, including men, women, and children. But in addition to this it must be remembered that the inhabitants of the State were by no means unanimous upon the subject of the Revolution. They were indeed utterly divided. And while there were but few men in the State who did not actually bear arms on the one side or the other, the population which supported the Revolution could not in any case have exceeded the 65,000 at which the population was estimated at the time. Mr. Sabine's estimate in the case of the State of South Carolina, which would be one soldier in every three of white population at its highest figure, is wholly inadmissible.

Under the plan for the reorganization of the army, as we have seen, the Continental army should have numbered 75,000 men. It, in fact, never reached, at any given time, but little more than one-third of that number. Washington, writing to a committee of Congress on the 15th of January, 1779, states that unless he was mistaken 26,000 was a larger number than ever was in the field;² and again in a letter to the President of Congress of the 18th of November of the same year he sends a return taken from the muster rolls of October of the troops of each State except South Carolina and Georgia, from which he says Congress will perceive "that our whole force, including all sorts of troops, non-commissioned officers and privates, drummers

¹ Elliot's *Debates*, vol. IV, 275.

² Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 161.



and fifers, supposing every man to have existed and to have been in service at that time, *a point, however, totally inadmissible*, amounted to but *twenty-seven thousand and ninety-nine*.”¹ And this was the number of continentals reported by General Knox for that year.² By the plan of Congress, assuming that each year’s returns were to be of additional men, as in the estimate of the New Hampshire Historical Society, which has been so blindly and generally followed, the number of continentals should at that time have reached the enormous figure of 142,309.³ Washington, it will be observed, states that up to 1779 there had never been in the field actually more than 26,000. The apportionment of the quotas of the various States, by Congress in 1776, was based upon an estimate of the population made by Congress, it was said, from the best calculation.⁴ But this estimate was not at all correct, and was certainly in some instances, if not in all, greater than the population proved to be. For instance, Massachusetts was put down as having a population of 400,000, whereas, in fact, she did not have but 352,000.⁵ New Hampshire

¹ Washington’s *Writings*, vol. VI, 402.
² *Am. State Papers*, Military Affairs, vol. I, 17.
³ Continentals reported by General Knox :—
1776 46,891
1777 34,820
1778 32,899
1779 27,699
Total 142,309
⁴ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. I, 15.
Massachusetts 400,000 Pennsylvania and Dela-
New Hampshire 150,000 ware 350,000
Rhode Island 59,678 Maryland 320,000
Connecticut 192,000 Virginia 650,000
New York 250,000 North Carolina 300,000
New Jersey 130,000 South Carolina 225,000
Total of the twelve associated colonies 3,028,670
⁵ *Am. Encyclopædia*, Eaton S. Drone.

was estimated at 150,000, whereas a survey taken the year before, 1775, partly by enumeration and partly by estimation, for the purpose of establishing a proper representation of the people, made the whole number 82,200.¹ So, too, with South Carolina the estimate of 225,000 was far in excess of the truth. We have shown that the white population at the utmost was not over 100,000; the number of negroes could not have made up the difference. By Governor Bull's report in 1769 the negroes in the colony numbered 80,000.² During the year 1770 importation had been prohibited.³ We have no mention of the number of negroes imported in 1771; but we have the statement, of the *South Carolina Gazette*, that in 1773 the importation reached the figures of 11,641, which was the greatest number imported in any year; that the next greatest number imported in a year was 4865, in 1772. The importation, therefore, in 1771 could not have reached the latter figure. The report of the historical committee of the Charleston Library estimates the number of negroes in 1773 as 110,000. Dr. Milligan puts them in 1775 at 104,000. Mr. Laurens estimated them in 1778, to the French minister, at 80,000. The Constitutional Convention in 1787 put them for representation at the same figure. By the census of 1790 they were 107,094. For our present purpose we will assume the estimates made by Mr. Laurens and the Constitutional Convention as probably correct, or nearly so, and put the whole population whether white or black at 180,000.

In 1754 there appears to have been, by an official census, 2448 negro slaves over sixteen years of age in Massachusetts.⁴ Supposing that by 1775 these had been doubled in

¹ Belknap's *Hist. of N. H.*, vol. I, 234.

² *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 807.

³ *Ibid.*, 380, 381.

⁴ Hildreth, vol. II, 419.

numbers, and that with those under sixteen years of age the negro population of that State to have been 6000, — a large estimate, — and deducting these 6000 from 352,000, there must yet have remained 346,000 white people in Massachusetts to have furnished 15 battalions of 680 men each = 10,800, while the 100,000 white people in South Carolina, assuming that they were so many, were called upon to furnish 6 battalions = 4080 men. The white people in Massachusetts were called upon to furnish 1 continental soldier for each 32 of inhabitants; the white people in South Carolina to furnish 1 continental soldier in every 25. In other words, the white people in South Carolina were called upon to furnish 25 per cent more continental soldiers in proportion to their numbers than were the white people in Massachusetts. It may, however, have been argued that as the slaves would furnish the labor to maintain the agriculture in such parts of the country as might remain in the peaceful possession of the States, and thus support the white men in the field, some allowance should be made on that account. But this is supposing the country could be preserved from invasion. Upon invasion the negro slaves at that time became a source of weakness to the invaded and of strength to the invader, even though he was not used by the invader as a soldier in his army. During the war between the States in 1861–65 it is true that the reverse was the fact, and that negro labor on the plantations allowed nearly all the white men in the Confederacy to take the field; but that, it must be remembered, was nearly a century later, when no importation of negroes had taken place for sixty years, and when the relation between masters and slaves in the South had greatly improved. To the lasting honor of the Southern people the future historian will point to the extraordinary fact that during the four terrible years of the war, while

the whole country was invaded, so kindly were the relations between the negro slaves and their masters that in no single instance was there a rising against the women and children of the Confederate soldiers upon the part of the negro slaves in whose care they were left. Negro troops, it is true, were raised by the Federal government, but only in territory permanently occupied by them. With immense armies surrounding the whole country, which came proclaiming their emancipation, millions of negro slaves remained faithful to their absent masters, who were in the field fighting for a cause which would retain them in slavery. But the case was very different at the time of the Revolution. Negro slaves at that time were in a far less civilized condition; a large part of them were newly imported from Africa. Under these circumstances planters, however well disposed to the Revolution, with great reason objected to leaving their families surrounded by these savages. When, therefore, the movements of the opposing armies left their plantations exposed to the invaders, no sense of patriotism, however strong, could overcome the demands of family affection and parental duty. Men would not leave their wives and children to the mercy of their slaves, incited to rapine and murder by the presence of, if not by the actual instigation of, a hostile army. If the New England militiaman could not be kept to the lines around Boston, though his family at home were in no immediate danger, still less could it be expected that the Carolinian on the coast should remain in the field while his were exposed to the barbarity of the savage and in the interior to the merciless Indian, in addition to the ordinary terrors of invasion. This apportionment, moreover, was based upon the assumption that the white people were practically united; but such was not the case in South Carolina; in no other State was there



so great and persistent a division as to the causes of the war and its conduct, — a division, however, which the coming invasion was, in a great measure, to obliterate.

South Carolina made no question, however, of her allotment, and undertook to provide the men called for. The State, as we have seen, had raised six regiments of provincial regulars. These regiments were transferred by the Provincial Assembly to the Continental service, and if they did not fill the quota called for, they furnished a well-organized and disciplined body, which had already seen service in battle and acquired a confidence gained only by victory.¹ In 1779 another — a regiment of Light Dragoons — had been raised by the Assembly, of which Daniel Horry was Colonel, Hezekiah Mahan, Major, John Couturier, John Hampton, James McDonald, James Dogharty, Thomas Giles, Benjamin Screven, and Richard Gough were captains.²

Under the act of Congress the soldiers of the continental regiments who were to be enlisted for the war were to be entitled, at the end of the service, to a land bounty of one hundred acres. Colonels were to have five hundred acres, and inferior officers an intermediate quantity correspond-

¹ These regiments as taken on the Continental establishment in 1776 were as follows : —

First South Carolina	750
Second South Carolina	750
Third South Carolina, or rangers	450
Fourth South Carolina, or artillery	300
Fifth South Carolina, riflemen	700
Sixth South Carolina, riflemen	500
Total	3450

General Knox's report credits South Carolina in 1776 with but 2060 continentals. In 1777 they were recruited up to full regiments of ten companies each.

² *The Gazette of the State of So. Ca.*, Feb. 24, 1779; *Ramsay's Rev-
in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 19.

ing to their rank. Twenty dollars was to be given to each recruit. So great, however, was the difficulty in obtaining such enlistment that an option was allowed for enlisting for three years; but these three-year recruits were to have no land. The States were to enlist their respective quotas, appoint their regimental officers, and provide them with arms and clothing. But the expenses of the operations, as well as the pay and expenses of the troops, were to be a common charge.¹

But these inducements were not found sufficient to fill the continental regiments, and the States began bidding against each other for recruits. Massachusetts offered an extra bounty of \$66, and South Carolina in 1779 first offered a bounty of \$500 to every one who would voluntarily enlist in either of her continental regiments for a period of sixteen months within one month from the 29th

¹ Hildreth, vol. III, 164. John Adams was opposed to long enlistments. He was willing that General Washington might obtain as many men as he could, "But I contended," he says, "that I knew the number to be obtained in this way would be very small in New England, from whence almost the whole army was derived (?). A regiment might possibly be obtained of the meanest, idlest, and worthless, but no more. A regiment was no army to defend this country. We must have tradesmen's sons and farmers' sons, or we would be without defence; and such men would certainly not enlist during the war or for long periods as yet. The service was too new; they had not yet become attached to it by habit. Was it credible," he asks, "that men who could get at home better living, more comfortable lodgings, more than double the wages, in safety, not exposed to the sickness of the camp, would bind themselves during the war? I knew it to be impossible. In the Middle States, since they imported from Ireland and Germany so many transported convicts and redemptioners, it was possible they might obtain some. Let them try. I had no objection." — *The Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. III, 48. And yet, incredible as such an enlistment seemed to Mr. Adams, in the war between the States, the author of this work served in a brigade of five thousand South Carolinians, including the highest and best in the land, who in 1861 voluntarily enlisted for the *whole war*, and served throughout it, regardless of the amount of their pay.

of January, with a decreasing rate for those who enlisted thereafter.¹ A few months after the bounty was enlarged to \$500 in hand paid on enlistment and \$2000 more at the end of twenty-one months' faithful service. These bounties were to be paid in indents of the Treasury, having ten per cent interest.² A further bounty of one hundred acres of land was also promised, and in case a soldier so enlisting should die or be killed in the service the indent and the land were to go to his lawful heirs. The limitation in this act of the promise of these bounties to those only who should voluntarily enlist was not without significance, since the State had adopted, as we shall see, the device of recruiting her battalions by forcing into their ranks, by way of punishment, all men convicted of being idle, lewd, and disorderly, or sturdy beggars. A few months after the bounty was increased to \$500 more upon enlistment and \$2500 more at the end of twenty-one months' faithful service.³

Washington was no doubt right in regard to the reorganization of the army into one of regulars, not only from a purely military point of view, but under the condition of affairs as they did actually exist. The plan was nevertheless unbecoming a people struggling for freedom. All this effort was to hire or force others to do the fighting for those who claimed to seek liberty and independence. The signers of the Declaration of Independence were generally young men, or were at least of military age. Those from South Carolina, as we have seen, did not average thirty years, and yet though the signers pledged each other, — their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in its support, — none of those whom we can recall regularly entered the military service to maintain it, and

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. IV, 461.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 502.

few distinguished themselves in the field.¹ Liberty and independence were to be bought and paid for. The war was to be fought vicariously. But as Grattan once exclaimed in the Irish Parliament, "The thing he proposes to buy is what cannot be sold — Liberty!" For alas! the candid student of the history of the Revolution must at last be forced to recognize and admit that the liberties of America were the shuttlecocks of foreign diplomacy, and secured at last in the cabinets of Europe rather than upon the fields of America. To the shame of America, in 1780 there were more Americans, it was claimed, serving in the Provincial Regiments of the British army than in the Continental service of the States; in 1781 there were more French troops at Yorktown than American regulars. Equality in numbers on that field was only maintained by Governor Nelson's Virginia militia. That victory was indeed quite as much a victory of France over Great Britain as a victory for American independence. The American Continental army, rank and file, was now

¹ Several of the signers served from time to time in the State troops and militia; some with distinction. William Whipple of New Hampshire was a Brigadier General of militia. Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island was an officer in a State regiment. Oliver Wolcott of Connecticut was Major General of militia. William Floyd of New York Colonel of militia. Lewis Morris of New York Brigadier General of militia. Benjamin Rush and John Morton of Pennsylvania were surgeons. George Ross of same State was an officer in a State regiment. Benjamin Harrison of Virginia was paymaster of Virginia State troops. Thomas Nelson, Jr., was commander of Virginia State forces, and as such received the thanks of Congress to himself and his officers and gentlemen for their patriotic efforts in the cause of their country. As Governor of Virginia he called out the State troops, and with them took part in the siege of Yorktown. Thomas Heyward, Jr., and Edward Rutledge were Captains in the artillery battalion of the Charlestown militia, and as such fought gallantly at Beaufort and the siege of Charlestown, Heyward shedding his blood. George Walton of Georgia, who was Colonel of militia, was wounded and taken prisoner at the siege of Savannah.

not an army of patriots, as were those who rushed to arms around Boston in 1775, or as those we shall see gathering around Sumter and Marion in this State in its darkest hour, but of mercenaries and hirelings, just as was that of Great Britain which was invading the country. Indeed, the British regulars and provincial regiments as they were depleted by the casualties of war and the expiration of the terms of service were recruited from the same class of population in America as were the continental regiments. And so it happened that men who served out their terms of enlistment in one army would enlist again in the other without regard to the principles for which they fought on the one side or the other. To such an extent did this exist that we shall see General Greene bitterly declaring that he fought Lord Rawdon with his deserters, while Rawdon fought him with his own.¹ Ranks which were filled with sturdy beggars, lewd, idle, and disorderly men, and deserters were not the place for patriots and decent citizens. If the militiaman was insubordinate and would leave the ranks when tired of the service, the hired and vagrant continental soldier, without patriotism or pride, engaged in a desperate cause, and often apparently a losing one, would desert when opportunity offered and circumstances invited. The militiaman when he left, whether with or without leave, would go home. The continental regular when he deserted would go to the enemy if he could.

There was no general uprising of the people in America. There was none in South Carolina until after the fall of Charlestown, the overthrow of the government, and the apparent subjugation of the State. Then we shall see the

¹ "General Greene was often heard to say 'that at the close of the war we fought the enemy with British soldiers, and they fought us with those of America.'" — Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. II, 220.

people rise against the British, not so much because of the original causes of the war, but because of the tyranny, oppression, and brutal conduct of the army. Then under leaders who had nothing to do with bringing on the war, forming themselves into volunteer partisan bands, they harassed and embarrassed the enemy's movements, broke up their communications, attacked and destroyed their outposts, and forced them to battle, and often to defeat. This uprising we shall see effecting momentous results for the benefit of the cause of the whole country. This was yet to come, and for the last three years of the struggle the war of American independence was fought on Carolina soil. But for the present the Revolutionists in South Carolina, as elsewhere in America, depended upon the regular force, the Continental army, as the proper defence of the State.

South Carolina had not only furnished her full quota of men for the Continental army, according to her population, but she had far exceeded her share of expenditure in the cause. No State but Massachusetts equalled her in contributions of money and supplies. The commissioners who finally settled the accounts for expenses of the respective States during the Revolution found that the little State with at the utmost but 100,000 white inhabitants had expended in the common cause \$11,523,299.29, and that after charging her for all advances, including the assumption of the State debt by the United States at the end of the war, there was still due her as overpaid \$1,205,978. The great State of Massachusetts, with twice the whole population of South Carolina, and more than three times her white population, which suffered from no invasion, — whose war the Revolution was, — had exceeded her in advances to the common cause by

but a few thousand dollars, the overpayment by that State having been \$1,248,801.¹

South Carolina had a right, therefore, now that the scene of war was to be changed from the Northern provinces to her soil, to look for assistance against the common enemy. But she was far away from the cluster of States around the seat of Congress at Philadelphia; the great territory of North Carolina, still sparsely populated, lay between her and Virginia; and now that Georgia had fallen, the same practical difficulty of obtaining assistance which had compelled South Carolina to depend upon her own resources for defence against the Spaniards and French, the Cherokees and the Yamassees, now again arose when she appealed to Washington and Congress for a part of the continental forces for which she had paid her quota — she was too far away!

When General Lee left the South, the command at Charlestown had devolved upon General Moore of North Carolina, who had come to the assistance of South Carolina in 1776 in command of the First North Carolina Continental Regiment.² He had been promoted a Con-

¹ The *Am. Almanac* (1831), 112. "It is equally true that South Carolina was the first State of the thirteen to form an independent constitution, and that she overpaid her proportion of the expenditures of the war in the sum of \$1,205,978." — *Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 80. The States which contributed more than their quotas to expenses incurred during the Revolutionary war, as allowed by the Commissioners who finally settled the accounts, were Massachusetts \$1,248,801, South Carolina \$1,205,978, Connecticut \$619,121, Rhode Island \$299,611, New Hampshire \$75,055, New Jersey \$49,030, Georgia \$19,988. Those which were found in debt to the United States for expenses incurred on their accounts were New York \$2,074,846, Delaware \$612,428, North Carolina \$501,082, Maryland \$151,640, Virginia \$100,879, Pennsylvania \$76,709. — Pitkin's *United States*, vol. II (Appendix 20), 538; *Am. Almanac* (1831), 112.

² General James Moore was the grandson of James Moore, the first Governor of South Carolina of that name, and nephew of James Moore,

tinental Brigadier General on the 1st of March of that year. Upon his departure the command of the troops in South Carolina had been assumed by General Robert Howe, who was also from North Carolina, as the senior continental officer present. On the 29th of October, 1776, Colonels Gadsden and Moultrie had been promoted Brigadier Generals. The First South Carolina Continental Regiment was after this commanded by Colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney; the Second by Colonel Isaac Motte; the Third, or Rangers, by Colonel William Thomson; the Fourth (artillery) by Colonel Owen Roberts; the Fifth (riflemen) by Colonel Isaac Huger; the Sixth (riflemen) by Colonel Thomas Sumter. The Regiment of Dragoons, under Colonel Daniel Horry, does not appear to have been taken into the continental line.

Although General Gadsden had always been of a military turn, having in 1756 organized the first artillery corps in South Carolina, and with it taken part in Governor Lyttleton's expedition against the Cherokees, and from which it might be supposed that he gathered some military experience, his temper unfitted him for the subordination of military life, and he did not long remain in the service. General Howe and himself soon became upon such unpleasant terms that when a communication between them was necessary it usually passed through General Moultrie's hands. The open rupture, which resulted in a duel, was upon the question of Howe's right to the command. In 1777, after General Howe had been in command of the post for more than six months, he received a letter from General Gadsden desiring to know by what right he commanded, and claiming that he himself was the natural

who had commanded the expedition sent to the assistance of North Carolina in 1713, and who was also Governor of South Carolina. *Hist. of So. Ca. under Prop. Gov.* (McCrady), 373, 374, 544, 654.

commander in South Carolina. General Howe replied, stating his position and authority; but with this General Gadsden was not satisfied, and proposed to refer the matter to Congress. To this General Howe very properly replied that as he had no doubts respecting his own position, he would express none, but that if General Gadsden desired it he would communicate his, Gadsden's, views to Congress. This was assented to. But General Howe, it appears, subsequently understood that Gadsden had become satisfied and did not therefore make any communication to Congress upon the subject. Meeting Howe some time after in the house of President Lowndes, Gadsden inquired of him if he had written as he agreed to do, and upon Howe's reply in the negative, though explaining to Gadsden why he had not, Gadsden became very indignant and answered that he would have the matter brought before the House of Assembly. A motion was accordingly made in that body by William Henry Drayton to inquire into the nature of General Howe's command in the State. This motion was at once seconded by Rawlins Lowndes and Gadsden himself, but, Howe writes, met with the warmest opposition from most of the leading men of the State. The names of these are not given, but it is easy to see that the matter was at once made a party question between Gadsden and his opponents. The motion after long and warm debate was lost, and thereupon General Gadsden resigned.¹ In forwarding Gadsden's resignation General Howe wrote giving his account of the circumstances under which it was made. Drayton, who was now in the Continental Congress, sent Gadsden a copy of this letter of Howe's, which had come into his hands as a member of that body; this Gadsden received in the midst of the excitement over the

¹ MS. volume of Christopher Gadsden, entitled *So. Ca. Miscellan.*

proclamation business and the riots occasioned thereby, but he at once wrote to Drayton upon the subject.¹ This letter to Drayton, dated the 4th of July, 1778, Gadsden intended as a public one in reply to Howe's, but Drayton not so understanding it made no effort to have it published among the members of Congress, and Gadsden's resignation was accepted without comment. At this Gadsden was deeply mortified, and it no doubt added to his bitterness in the political complications at the time at home. He had not supposed that immediate action would have been taken upon the resignation, he had expected that he would have been allowed an opportunity to be heard by Congress. Unfortunately, as he himself writes, his resignation came into Congress at an unlucky time, when two or three other generals were threatening Congress with their resignations. Gadsden was anxious that Congress should know that the case was very different from theirs—that he had never disputed the power of Congress. Nay, moreover, as he could with pride and truth assert, "No man in America ever strove more *and more successfully*, first to bring about a Congress, in 1765, and then to support it *ever afterwards*, than myself." He had resigned because the House of Assembly at home would not inquire whether Howe ever had had a commission from Congress. Had Howe shown such a commission, he would have submitted, whatever he might have thought of Howe personally. Gadsden at the time was no doubt in a great state of excitement. He was struggling for power with John Rutledge and could not fail to perceive that in carrying the new Constitution he had achieved for himself a barren victory, and that in forcing Rutledge's resignation of the Presidency he had prepared the way for

¹ Letter in Laurens's MS., *Promiscuous Letters*, 1776-78-80, So. Ca. Hist. Soc.,

his own discomfiture. He was embittered, and in his resentment spoke very hardly of Howe, charging him with insincerity and duplicity. This led to a duel between them, in which the foibles as well as the high characteristics of Gadsden were singularly exemplified. The seconds of both parties saw at once that a resort to the field was not called for, under the duelling code, and of this Gadsden's friends strongly advised him, assuring him that Howe had made all proper concessions, and endeavored to persuade him to offer an apology to Howe. He admitted the correctness of the advice, but positively refused the apology. When they met, however, on the field, after insisting upon Howe's first firing, he fired his own pistol in the air, and then made the apology his friends had advised in the first instance. In writing to Drayton about the controversy over the proclamation, he had styled himself *Don Quixote Secundus*; he now exhibited the highest characteristics of that noble, if deluded, gentleman. After what had taken place he seems to have thought he could not apologize until he had given Howe satisfaction; insisting upon receiving Howe's fire¹ he refrained from returning it, and then apologized.

In 1777 the North Carolina troops, which had been serving in South Carolina, had been withdrawn and sent to join Washington's army in the Jerseys, and we learn from Moultrie that in March of that year 700 of the continental troops of South Carolina were serving in Georgia, leaving but 400 or 500 for the defence of Charlestown, Georgetown, and Beaufort.² The continentals of the State, that

¹ Letter of Christopher Gadsden to William Henry Drayton, dated September 9, 1778, MS. volume of Christopher Gadsden, entitled *So. Ca. Miscellan.* The account of this duel, published in the *Gazette* of September 3, 1778, was parodied in New York by the celebrated and unfortunate Major André. See Johnson's *Traditions*, 204.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, 190, 217.

is the original six regiments, had by this time dwindled to but 1200 men. A whole company of 50 men, we have seen, had been lost in the naval expeditions in which they were sent as marines. There was great difficulty in recruiting, and in March, 1778, the General Assembly passed an act to complete the quota of the troops for the continental service, from the provisions of which we may judge alike of the urgency of the occasion and of the character of the rank and file of these regiments. The act, reciting the necessity that the six regiments should be completed without delay, thereupon provided "that all idle and disorderly men who have no habitation or settled place of abode or no visible lawful way or means of maintaining themselves and their families, all sturdy beggars, and strolling or straggling persons" be obliged to serve in one of the continental regiments. Justices of the Peace were required to apprehend and try persons charged with being vagrants, with the aid of six neighboring freeholders, and upon conviction the vagrants were to be enlisted as private soldiers in one of the regiments, and obliged to serve during the war. The legislators of these times were sportsmen as well as patriots, and the killing of game in any but a huntsman-like manner was so disreputable in their opinion as to condemn one to service in the war; and so it was provided by this act that all persons convicted of fire-hunting should in like manner as vagrants be declared duly enlisted in one of the regiments. To induce others, however, to enlist and associate with these idle and lewd persons and fire-hunters, all the lands in the fork between the Tugaloo and Keowee rivers, lately ceded by the Indians, that is, the lands between the Savannah and Keowee in what is now Anderson and Oconee counties, were reserved for bounty lands, one hundred acres of which were to be given to every soldier

who had already enlisted or should thereafter enlist in either of these regiments.¹

Colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, then Colonel of the First Regiment, impatient of inaction and desirous of obtaining experience in the field, had, in the fall of 1777, joined the army in the vicinity of Philadelphia, and had been immediately received into Washington's military family, appointed aide-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief; and in that capacity he had been present at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, where by his intelligence, zeal, and activity he had won Washington's confidence; but immediately upon the approach of danger to the South had returned and resumed command of his regiment. John Laurens, son of Henry Laurens, President of Congress, was also one of Washington's aides, and had distinguished himself at Germantown and Monmouth, and was wounded in the former battle. He had fought a duel with, and wounded, General Lee for disrespectful language in regard to Washington, had established a character for intrepidity, and had gained the affections and confidence of the Commander-in-chief. He also hastened to his native State upon the threat of danger in this quarter.

It was indeed impossible for Washington to send assistance to South Carolina. On the 8th of May, 1779, he writes to Gouverneur Morris that his army was little more than a skeleton, and he goes on to say, "Whenever I endeavor to draw together the continental troops for the most essential purposes, I am embarrassed with complaints of exhausted, defenceless situations in particular States, and find myself obliged either to resist solicitations made with such a degree of emphasis as scarcely to leave a choice, or to sacrifice the most obvious principles of mili-

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. IV, 410.

tary prosperity and risk the general safety.”¹ It was doubtless the appeal from South Carolina for reënforcements to which Washington thus alluded, and while his policy as to the conduct of the war as a whole in all the thirteen colonies was, we again admit, beyond question wise, and his military views clearly correct, yet all the same the fact remained to the people of South Carolina that they were beyond the pale of the general safety, and that the principles of military expediency required them to be left, in a great measure, to shift for themselves. The belief that South Carolina and Georgia were to be abandoned by Congress from this time took deep possession of the public mind and pervaded all ranks and classes, and influenced the conduct of many.² The people recollected that they had sent without hesitation a large part of the powder they had seized in 1775 to assist in maintaining the siege of Boston. They had lavishly contributed to the common expense. The continental troops of Virginia and North Carolina were almost all serving with the Northern army, and those of this State and Georgia had been wasted and frittered away in the swamps of Georgia and Florida upon useless expeditions, in sickly seasons, against the advice and protests of the South Carolina officers; and now that the State was invaded and a persistent effort was being made to subjugate it, the South Carolinians were told that they were too far away to be protected by Congress. There was great discontent. The people were divided as to the cause of the war, and the declaration and assertion of independence of England had been against the sentiments and wishes of many who had

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 251.

² Garden's *Anecdotes*, 189, quoting John Mathews; letter of John Rutledge, May 24, 1780, unpublished *Revolutionary Papers*; *Russell's Magazine*, September, 1857, 537.

originally favored the Revolution. The number of the Revolutionists had again been diminished by the conciliatory acts of Great Britain, and now Congress was unable to send succor in the time of need.

The net result of South Carolina's appeals to Congress for assistance consisted of a French engineer, Colonel Laumoy,¹ Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, and General Count Pulaski, with the remnant of his nondescript corps, which had been cut to pieces at Little Egg Harbor in the fall before, and which now consisted of but one hundred and twenty men, lancers and infantry, called by courtesy a legion.² Pulaski came with a reputation for heroism and military ability, notwithstanding his surprise and disaster on the October before. The heroism he here abundantly displayed, and sacrificed his life for the strangers amongst whom he had come and for the cause he had espoused, but the military ability he did not exhibit.

Colonel Laurens, hastening to his native State in the hour of her need, was the most valuable acquisition that South Carolina received. He brought with him a resolution of Congress of the 5th of November, 1778.³

"That John Laurens, Esquire, aide-de-camp to General Washington, be presented with a Continental Commission of Lieutenant Colonel in testimony of the sense which Congress entertain of his patriotic and spirited services as a volunteer in the American Army; and of his brave conduct in several actions, particularly in that of Rhode Island on the 29th of August last, and that General Washington be directed whenever an opportunity shall offer to give Lieutenant Colonel Laurens command agreeable to his rank."

¹ Mons. de Laumoy (France), Colonel Engineers, November 17, 1777; wounded at Stono Ferry, June 20, 1779; brevet Brigadier General, September 30, 1783; retired October 10, 1783 (Heitman).

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 423.

³ Ramsay's *Hist. of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 497.

From the highest and most honorable motives Colonel Laurens had declined this commission; he could not accept it, he wrote, without injury to the rights of officers of the line and to his colleagues in the family of the Commander-in-chief, over whom he would thus be promoted. He had, however, later, — to wit, on the 29th of March, 1779, — been promoted in the regular order to the same rank; and with his commission he brought also a letter from Washington himself to Governor Rutledge, telling that he had served in the General's family as aide-de-camp in two campaigns, of the General's particular friendship for the young officer, and of the high opinion he entertained of his talents and merit. But instead of bringing troops Colonel Laurens brought the advice of Congress, that as many of the citizens of South Carolina must remain at home to prevent revolts among the negroes, or their desertion to the enemy, that South Carolina and Georgia should arm three thousand of the most vigorous and enterprising of them under white officers. This was Alexander Hamilton's recommendation, and it was approved by Henry Laurens, — Colonel Laurens's father, — who wrote to Washington, "Had we arms for three thousand such black men as I could select in South Carolina, I should have no doubt of driving the British out of Georgia and subduing East Florida before the end of July." Washington's answer to this was conclusive: "Should we begin to form battalions of them, I have not the smallest doubt" the British would "follow us in it and justify the measure upon our own ground. The contest then must be, Who can arm fastest? And where are our arms?" The absurdity of a people achieving *their* liberty and independence by means of the valor of their slaves does not seem to have occurred to the Congressmen. The propo-

sition was heard in South Carolina with indignation and rejected with scorn.¹

The Revolutionists in North Carolina fully recognized the fact that it was wise, as well as generous, to furnish assistance to their neighboring State. It was better for them to send troops to fight the British in South Carolina, and thus keep the seat of war there, than allow it to be transferred to their own soil. Early in 1779 Governor Caswell, in response to an appeal from South Carolina, called out three thousand militia, and conferred the command on Major General John Ashe of New Hanover. These troops were from Wilmington, Newbern, Edenton, and Halifax districts. The State of North Carolina, however, had no arms, and sent these men forward on the expectation that they would be armed in South Carolina; but so scarce were arms that only the most inferior patterns could be furnished. All but one of the continental battalions from North Carolina were now with Washington; but this one was also sent to South Carolina. Well might Charles Pinckney write, on the 24th of February, 1779:²—

“As to further aid from North Carolina they have agreed to send us 2000 more troops immediately. We have now upwards of 3000 of their men with us, and I esteem this last augmentation as the highest possible mark of their affection for us and as the most convincing proof of their zeal for the glorious cause in which they are engaged. They have been so willing and ready on all occasions to afford us all the assistance in their power, that I shall ever love a North Carolinian, and join with General Moultrie in confessing that they have been the salvation of this country.”

¹ Bancroft, vol. V, 370. Some black dragoons were organized by the British in the last year of the war, and appeared in the field, as we shall see, upon one or two occasions.

² Governor Graham's lecture. *No. Ca. University Magazine*, April, 1878, quoted in *North Carolina, 1780-81*, David Schenck, LL.D., 35.

But while Governor Caswell was doing all he could for the assistance of South Carolina, a curious episode, indicative of the spirit of the times, occurred between the delegates in Congress of the two States. Notwithstanding the conquest of Georgia and the threatened invasion of South Carolina, Congress was amusing itself with the negotiation of a treaty with the French envoy as to the ultimate terms upon which only the United States would make peace with Great Britain; and New England, not content with the independence which she believed, through the aid of the French, would now be secured, put in a demand that peace should not be made unless the common right of the United States to fish on the coasts, bays, and banks of Nova Scotia, the banks of Newfoundland, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the straits of Labrador, and Belle Island should be recognized;¹ and on this question it appears that Henry Laurens had supported the demand of New England, William Henry Drayton, the other delegate from South Carolina present in Congress, opposing it. Thereupon, on the 2d of April, 1779, the delegates from North Carolina — John Penn, Whitmell Hill, and Thomas Burke — wrote to Henry Laurens and William Henry Drayton as delegates from South Carolina, protesting against Mr. Laurens's course.

"Considering," they wrote, "that a Question now before Congress involves the continuance of hostilities, even tho' our Liberty sovereignty & Independence, absolute and unlimited, as well in matters of Government as Commerce, shall be acknowledged & secured, unless Great Britain will, acknowledging a right of fishing on all Banks & Coasts of North America which were exclusively reserved to Britain by the Treaties of Utrecht & Paris, as fully as the Inhabitants of the Countries now composing the United States of North America enjoyed when subjects of Great Britain; — a right which we deem more

¹ Bancroft, vol. V, 320.

extensive than can with justice be insisted on, & which our Allies by their engagements are not bound to assist us in contending for, & which the Minister plenipotentiary of France assures us his Court cannot agree to continue this War for. Considering also that in a late Vote upon the Question alluded to, Mr. Laurens one of the Delegates from your State gave his Voice for continuing hostilities for the aforesaid object, even tho' our Allies should be not in a condition to assist us from which we infer, that he relies on a degree of strength & resources in your state which is unknown to us, or on a mistaken Idea of the strength & resources of North Carolina. . . . We esteem it our duty to inform you that in case of the continuance of the War for the aforesaid object North Carolina is not in a condition to make any exertions for the defence of South Carolina, nor do we believe she will be inclined to make any."

Enclosed in this paper was the copy of a communication which Messrs. Penn, Hill, and Burke informed Messrs. Laurens and Drayton they proposed to send to the Governor of North Carolina. The letter goes over the same ground. It says that although Congress a few days before had passed several resolutions stating the situation of South Carolina and Georgia to be such that they were incapable of any adequate efforts for their own defence, and recommending Virginia and North Carolina to make every effort to raise forces for their assistance, and that although it was clear that no succors could be sent to them from the main army or any other States, and that although North Carolina had been from the very beginning of the war harassed with efforts for her Southern neighbors under the idea that they were too weak for their own defence, yet that a late vote in Congress had inclined them to believe that they had been very much mistaken, that from Mr. Laurens's vote they were now driven to the conclusion that Mr. Laurens's State was so strong and powerful in resources unknown to them that he was able to defy all those difficulties which arise from deranged and almost annihilated finances, ruined com-

merce, want of manufactures, obstructed agriculture, wasted forces, and slaughtered fellow-citizens; from want of men, arms, ammunition, provisions, equipment,—difficulties which appeared to them almost ready to overwhelm the exhausted country. After much more of this sarcasm the letter concluded with the suggestion that any further exertion on the part of North Carolina might be dispensed with, and the expression of the hope that her militia might return home as soon as possible, and that no more battalions should be raised in the State for the purpose of being sent to South Carolina.

To the North Carolina delegates, aware of the appeals which were constantly coming from their sister State, and no doubt fully realizing the danger to their own if South Carolina should be overrun, it must have been provoking indeed to find Laurens sustaining the New Englanders in their extravagant demand, and voting with them to make England's compliance with it a condition of peace. But it was alike ungenerous and unwise to permit that resentment to carry them to this extent. To withdraw their troops from Laurens's State was simply to invite the invasion of their own.

Unfortunately for South Carolina her two attending delegates in Congress at the time were on unfriendly terms, and this unhappy personal relation was carried into their official intercourse to such an extent as to excite comment and observation. Mr. Drayton being asked by Mr. Adams how it happened that he always voted counter to Colonel Laurens, replied: "We vote systematically. As I always vote first, and could not possibly determine on which side he would give his voice, the system must have been confined to himself." With these relations existing between them Colonel Laurens believed, and said as much, that his colleague was concerned in procuring

these letters in order to injure him. He writes to Mr. Drayton, sending him "the letter" and the address to the Governor of North Carolina, "You had some knowledge of these letters before we read them yesterday morning, therefore I request you will honor me with an explicit reply and candid opinion on the propriety of the measure which North Carolina has adopted on the occasion: if you, sir, approve of their proceeding, I shall be glad of a conference with you on the important subjects alluded to." Mr. Drayton, in his reply, does not deny his previous connection with the letter, but declines "giving an opinion which there is no necessity (he) should hazard," and adds that he had answered on his part the official memorial, ardently requesting that the delegates "of North Carolina would not send their intended letter to their Governor, and assuring them that South Carolina when attacked as she now is absolutely stands in need of the sisterly aid of North Carolina, and that in a powerful degree." Mr. Laurens replies to this very angrily. He writes: "You have declined giving an opinion or holding a conference, which evinces that you not only 'vote' but act 'systematically'; here you have drawn a line between us, henceforth I will neither receive from you nor trouble you with a letter of controversy, but I will never withhold my voice in confirmation of any motion of yours in Congress, nor my utmost support to your measures out of doors, where we may be jointly concerned, which shall appear to be conducive to public good. . . ." He continues: —

"Did the measures adopted by the Gentlemen of North Carolina point, in your view, Sir, to no higher an object than aid to a sister State, which it is neither in their power to direct or restrain? Were you less affected by an attempt of violence upon the suffrages of free Citizens as well as upon the honor of all these Independent States, than

you were by groundless apprehensions of temporary evils to your own? Do you think Sir, that *your* ardent requests can lull the Resolutions of those Gentlemen or warp their inclinations from the pursuit of a duty which they hold indispensably necessary? Did not you feel a little for the breach of plighted faith and honor to keep secret deliberation upon a point, the disclosure of which may dash our infant Independence against the Stones? Or did you think me blind? Think, speak, and act Sir as you shall judge most convenient. I shall persevere in acting in all respects with propriety towards you, with diligence and fidelity in the common Cause of America, and with all the most inviolable attachment to that State whose particular Servant I am."¹

To the Governor of North Carolina Mr. Laurens writes a long letter, in which he charges that the whole matter was of a plan long settled to "hunt me down." It is not known whether the letters of the delegates were actually sent to the Governor of North Carolina. It is probable that they were not, as letters of explanation passed afterward between Mr. Laurens and Messrs. Penn, Hill, and Burke. While this controversy between the delegates in Congress was going on, Prévost was in Georgia preparing for his invasion of South Carolina.

Ramsay the historian states that before the General Assembly, which elected John Rutledge, adjourned, they had delegated to him and to his Council power "to do everything that appeared to him and to them necessary for the public good."²

This was following the precedent which had been adopted in 1775 when, upon an adjournment of the General Assembly, William Henry Drayton, with two others, Charles Pinckney and Thomas Heyward, Jr., were authorized to order whatever they should think necessary for

¹ Laurens's MS., *Promiscuous Letters*, 1778-80, So. Ca. Hist. Soc.

² Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 19. There are no journals of the General Assembly of this time.

the public safety until the meeting of Congress the next day; and as had been done in 1776 when, after adopting the Constitution, the Congress adjourned, "leaving the administration of the government to the President (John Rutledge) and Privy Council."¹ Still larger powers were yet to be conferred upon John Rutledge in the supreme emergency of the struggle. For the present under these he proceeded with great vigor — a vigor that ran at times counter to the wishes and designs of the continental officers, who considered themselves in absolute and exclusive control of all military movements. He assembled all the militia he could collect and established a permanent camp at Orangeburgh, as a central point from Charlestown and Augusta.

¹ *Memoirs of the Revolution* (Drayton), vol. II, 253.

CHAPTER XV

1778-1779

SOUTH CAROLINA was now to be the theatre of the war until the close of the struggle for independence. For four years she was to be rent and torn and trampled as no other State in the Union. The ploughers were to plough upon her back and make long their furrows. Her people were to fall by the sword, and to be consumed by the fire ; they were to be oppressed not only by the stranger, but every one by another, every one by his neighbor. And all this in a cause in which she had not willingly embarked ; the unequal burden of which her wise men had foreseen, and from the calamities of which they had endeavored to save her ; but through which sufferings in the providence of God the common foe was to be retained upon her soil until the nations of Europe should interpose and end the war, thus securing through her blood and treasure the liberty and independence of the thirteen States. Left mainly to her own resources, says Bancroft, it was through the depths of wretchedness that her sons were to bring her back to her place in the republic, after suffering more and daring more and achieving more than the men of any other State.¹

After the disastrous expedition of General Lee against Florida, in 1776, the British had erected a fort at St. Mary's River, from which they frequently raided the southern parts of Georgia. To put an end to this Gen-

¹ *Hist. of the U. S.*, vol. V, 375.

eral Howe unfortunately resumed the invasion in 1778, and conducted it with no better success than had Lee. The troops which he took with him on the expedition were six hundred South Carolina continentals under Colonel Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, five hundred Georgia continentals under Colonel Samuel Elbert of Georgia, and a considerable body of militia drawn from both States. That from Georgia was commanded by Governor Houston in person. The South Carolina militia were under Colonels Andrew Williamson and Stephen Bull. The route of the expedition lay through a country so barren that not a berry was to be found, nor a bud to be seen. No opposition of consequence from the enemy was met until the expedition reached Fort Tonym. Indeed, it is not improbable that General Prévost who commanded in Florida was content to allow the season and climate to fight for him. And, as it was in Lee's invasion, the English could have had no better ally. A malarial region, intense heat, bad water, insufficient shelter, and salt meat so impaired the health of Howe's troops that the hospital returns showed one-half the men upon the sick list. Through lack of forage horses perished, and those which remained were so enfeebled that they were incapable of transporting the artillery and wagons. The soldiers were dispirited and distracted. The command was rent by factions, and Howe proved incompetent to deal with its discordant element. The same question which Gadsden had raised with Howe in Charlestown was now made in the midst of the expedition by Governor Houston and Colonel Williamson. Governor Houston refused to receive orders from Howe, and Williamson would not yield obedience to a continental officer.¹ The only troops upon which Howe could rely were the continental detach-

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 230.

ments under Colonels Pinckney and Elbert. A council of war was called, and it ordered a retreat, but not before the little army had sustained a loss of upward of five hundred men¹ and more than half the six hundred South Carolina regular troops were in their graves or in the hospitals.²

There was, however, a brilliant episode to this unfortunate affair. Colonel Elbert, learning that several of the enemy's vessels, the brigantine *Hinchenbrook*, the sloop *Rebecca*, and a prize brig, were lying at Frederica, detailed three hundred men and a detachment of artillerists with two field-pieces, of which he took command in person. Putting them on board of three galleys, he embarked at Darien and effected a landing a mile below the town, to which he immediately sent a detachment which seized some marines and sailors of the *Hinchenbrook*, and the next morning with the three little galleys boldly attacked the British ships drawn up in order of battle, and captured them without the loss of a man. Colonel Pinckney wrote General Moultrie that, notwithstanding the reflections cast on the propriety of Howe's expedition at that season, it was incontrovertible that with the capture of the *Hinchenbrook* and the other vessels it had proved the salvation of the State of Georgia. But if so, its salvation was but for a short period. The expedition which sailed from New York under Colonel Campbell and Prévost's army from Florida were to find no force to oppose them, and Georgia was soon to be in complete possession of the British troops.

Prévost had wisely allowed Howe's expedition to exhaust itself, and as it drew back its weak, sickly, and

¹ *Life and Services of General Samuel Elbert*, Charles C. Jones, Jr., 21; Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. I, 152.

² Letter of Major Thomas Pinckney, Johnson's *Traditions*, 89.



discordant parts it left the whole country open to his movements in coöperation with the expedition from New York. For this purpose Prévost was instructed to invade Georgia from the south, and having captured Sunbury — a seaport of considerable wealth and importance — he was to move upon Savannah. In pursuance of this plan two detachments were sent forward by Prévost, — one by sea, conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Fuser, to reduce Sunbury, and the other penetrating by land to devastate the lower portion of Georgia. The two detachments were to form a junction at Sunbury. The first party reached Sunbury and demanded its surrender, but Lieutenant Colonel Lachlan McIntosh in reply simply said, “Come and take it.” Upon which the party retired to a neighboring island. The other party pursued their march, opposed only by a hundred militia under General Screven, who skirmished with them as they advanced. In one of these engagements General Screven was wounded and fell from his horse, when he was brutally murdered, in retaliation, it was said, for the manner in which one Captain Moore, of Brown’s Rangers, had been killed. The invaders pursued their march until they were within three miles of Ogeechee Ferry, where they were met by Colonel Elbert with about two hundred continentals, in works erected by Mr. Savage with his own slaves, prepared to dispute their passage. This party, like that which had reached Sunbury, immediately retreated when opposed. Prévost and Fuser, failing to effect a junction, abandoned the siege of Sunbury, and, retreating upon Florida, did not unite with Campbell in his attack upon Savannah. But in their retreat they laid waste the country for many miles, burnt St. John’s Church, a number of dwelling houses, and all the rice and other grain within their reach, and carried off with them all the negroes, horses,

cattle, and plate that could be removed either by land or water.¹

Ramsay says it is impossible to tell whether this burning, plundering incursion introductory to a serious plan of operations advanced or impeded the British designs. It certainly alarmed the fears of some ; but on others it produced quite the contrary effect. The indignation of the latter was roused, and they were stimulated to do and suffer everything rather than submit to such conquerors. There is little question that it was just such conduct as this which ultimately defeated the British. This was the experience in New Jersey the year before. The proclamations and the printed protections of the British commanders, on the faith of which the inhabitants in general had stayed at home and had forborne to take up arms, had proved of no avail. The Hessians could not or would not understand them, but plundered friend and foe alike. The British soldiery often followed their example, and the plunderings of both were at times attended by the most brutal outrages on the weaker sex, which inflamed the dullest spirits to revenge. The Jerseys were thus aroused against the invaders. In Washington's retreat of more than a hundred miles through the State he had not been joined by more than a hundred of its inhabitants, but when after Princeton the British retreated, sufferers on both sides arose as one man to avenge their personal injuries.² The same was to be the experience in South Carolina.

These movements on the part of Prévost greatly alarmed Howe, as well they might, in view of the weakness of his command and its distance from any reinforcements. He writes, on the 27th of November, in great urgency to Moultrie at Charlestown to hasten up the troops under

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 3.

² Irving's *Life of Washington*, vol. III, 3.

the command of Isaac Huger, lately made Brigadier General.¹ "Let them march with all possible expedition," he writes; "baggage at this time is not to be considered, and provisions may be had at every house — let the men force on, and if some cannot march with the rest, let them proceed without the least delay, as this attempt upon Georgia is indeed a serious one." Moultrie replies on the 28th that he has sent an express to Huger to expedite his march, leaving his baggage and weak men behind him; that he will send Colonel Henderson's battalion off to-morrow; that Thomson's regiment, not far from him, is taking the shortest route to Purrysburg, and that the President, Rawlins Lowndes, has given the Quartermaster General a power to impress what wagons may be wanted for the expedition. Prévost, however, fell back to Florida, and Howe had a month's respite; but the delay brought him no accession of strength.

On the 27th of December, 1778, the fleet from New York, which transported the expedition against Georgia, arrived off the mouth of the Savannah, crossed the bar, and lay at anchor within it.² The troops which composed the invading force were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell, and well for the British cause would

¹ Colonel Isaac Huger, of the Fifth Regiment, South Carolina Continentals (riflemen), was promoted Brigadier General, January 9, 1777. Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 146.

² The expedition consisted of the Seventy-first Regiment, — two battalions of Hessians, four battalions of North and South Carolina provincials in the British service, New York volunteers, and a detachment of royal artillery, amounting in all to three thousand men. The Seventy-first Regiment (Scotch) from this time is found in almost every battle fought in South Carolina or Georgia, until it was cut to pieces at Cowpens on the 17th of January, 1781. The North Carolina regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Hamilton; the South Carolina regiment by Colonel Alexander Innes, who had been Secretary to Lord William Campbell, Governor of South Carolina.

it have been had he been given a commensurate rank and intrusted with the entire command in the Southern provinces. His brilliant conduct in defeating Howe and securing Savannah, as we shall presently see, demonstrated his military fitness for such a command, while his nice sense of honor and noble conduct endeared him to the people whom he was sent to overawe. The friends of independence, it was said, had everything to fear from his wisdom and humanity, but their alarm on this account was of short duration. Smaller men with a narrower policy were to be intrusted with a work which could have been accomplished only by one of his abilities and character.¹ The naval force of the expedition was commanded by Commodore Hyde Parker. Major General Prévost with his troops from Florida was ordered to join the expedition and take command of the whole ; but, as we shall see, so ably did Colonel Campbell form his plans upon reaching the Savannah, and so well was he supported by the cordial coöperation of Commodore Parker and the naval forces, that the reduction of the province was practically completed before that General's arrival.

The morning after its arrival, the 28th, the fleet proceeded up the river, and on the morning of the 29th the debarkation of the troops began. At daybreak the light infantry, the New York volunteers, and the first battalion of the Seventy-first Regiment effected a landing in front of Girardeau's plantation. From this landing-place a narrow causeway, with a ditch on each side, led through a rice-field to the high ground beyond. Captain Cameron of the Seventy-first, having first reached the shore with his company of light infantry, immediately formed them and advanced. At the end of the causeway these were met with a general discharge of musketry, by which this officer was

¹ Garden's *Anecdotes*, 277.



killed with two of his company, and several were wounded ; but the impetuosity of the Highlanders cleared the ground of the party defending it. Whilst the rest of the troops were landing Colonel Campbell reconnoitred the position of Howe's army and determined to attack him before the evening.¹ With the decision and energy of his character, it is not surprising that he should have done so, for Howe had but six or seven hundred men, and some of them very raw troops, with which to meet him.² Howe had called a council of war to determine whether he should retreat, or remain and defend the town, and contrary to the received maxim that a council of war never fights, it was resolved to remain and resist. Determined to fight, the ground for the battle was well chosen, and but for an oversight would have enabled him to have made a stout resistance with even his small command, and possibly to have held out until General Lincoln reached him, who, he had certain information, was marching to his assistance. At a short distance in his front, and extending parallel to it, was a lagoon through which crossed the road approaching his position. The bridge over the stream running through the lagoon was destroyed to retard the enemy's advance. Howe's right was covered by a morass thick set with woods, and interspersed with some houses occupied by riflemen ; his left rested on the swamps of the river, and his rear rested upon the town and some old works on the Savannah.³ The little band was divided into two wings, General Huger commanding the right wing and Colonel Elbert the left. Thus posted, Howe awaited the attack, and had it been made only in front, it would, no doubt, have been obstinately disputed. But while Howe had been

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 69.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, 252, 253.

³ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 119.

stationed for some time on this very ground, having had his headquarters in Savannah, and Campbell had only been in the neighborhood twenty-four hours, Campbell had, in that short time, discovered a path through the morass which Howe deemed impassable. Detaching the light infantry under Sir James Baird, supported by the New York volunteers, by this path through the swamp he gained the rear of the American troops. Engaging Howe's attention in the front with a feint, he waited until Sir James Baird, under the guidance of a negro, suddenly issued from the swamp and attacked the body of militia which was posted to secure the road leading from Ogeechee. Hitherto the British troops in front had remained quiet upon their ground without firing a gun in return to Howe's artillery, but as soon as the light infantry had turned his flank, the whole British line advanced. Assailed in front, the Americans gave way, and, retreating, ran across Sir James Baird's party, and the battle was over in a few minutes. The defeat was instantaneous and decisive. Howe was pursued through Savannah, and with a small part of his little army escaped into South Carolina, losing before night five hundred and fifty men killed and taken, with his artillery and baggage.

Seldom was so decisive a victory gained with so little loss, amounting only to seven killed and nineteen wounded. Its results were commensurably great. Georgia was secured to the British control for the rest of the war. The lower part of the province was entirely at peace in less than ten days after the defeat of the Americans. A great number of the inhabitants came in, and, having taken the oath of allegiance, submitted themselves again to the authority of the mother country. Rifle companies and dragoons were formed out of those who came in to renew their allegiance, and these were employed to patrol the

country and give information of the movements of their fellow-countrymen.

South Carolina was now a frontier State, with the enemy firmly planted upon her flank.

The conduct of Howe in the expedition to Florida had given great dissatisfaction. His removal from the command of the Southern department had been asked by the delegates in Congress from South Carolina and Georgia before his disastrous defeat at Savannah; and by a resolve of the Continental Congress September 26, 1778, General Benjamin Lincoln of Massachusetts, who had been second in command to Gates at Saratoga, was ordered to take command in the Department of the South and to repair immediately to Charlestown. We have seen what great results had followed the capture of Burgoyne. But Schuyler was to be avenged. The laurels which he had prepared for himself at Saratoga had been snatched from him by Gates. Both Gates and his second in command, Lincoln, were upon the strength of that victory to be sent to the South, where their real military abilities were to be tested, and both of them were to fail. Lincoln was first tried.

It happened that General Lincoln arrived in his new department simultaneously with the arrival of the British expedition against it, and he was hurrying to the scene of action when Howe's unfortunate battle took place. He found, on his arrival, a department, but no army to command. The South Carolina regulars had been reduced by this time to about 1000 men. Something less than 500 were in garrison at Charlestown, and Huger had about that number with him near Purrysburg.¹ There were left but 150 Georgia continentals under Colonel Elbert.²

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 258.

² *Ibid.*, 270.

Upon learning of the intention of the British to invade the Southern States, President Lowndes, in order to keep as great a force as possible in the country, had laid a general embargo and prohibited the sailing of vessels from any port of the State. This was repeated for two successive periods of thirty days each. He also ordered the owners of cattle, sheep, and hogs on the sea islands and other points immediately exposed to the incursions of the enemy to remove them so as to prevent the British forces from making use of them. He appointed Richard Richardson, Stephen Bull, and Andrew Williamson, each of whom had already commanded in the field, Brigadier Generals, and drafted a large portion of the militia, which he put under the command of Richardson. But this force turned out to be a very unruly body. The militia laws were very lax and defective, and popular sentiment too much divided to supply the want of a more vigorous system. The men thus called into the field, grown up in habits of freedom and independence, impatiently submitted to military discipline. When ordered out they would demand, "Where they were going?" and "How long they were to stay?"¹ Then there was still the open question as to the authority of the continental officers over the militia.

Apprised of the proposed invasion of Georgia, the North Carolina Provincial Congress wisely determined, as we have seen, to send aid at once to the threatened point, and thus by assisting her sister States to preserve her own territory from the enemy.

These troops of North Carolina under Generals Ashe and Rutherford, but without arms, had responded so promptly that had it not been for the delay of ten days near Charlestown before they were furnished with arms,

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 12.



they would have been in time to join General Howe before the reduction of Savannah. But while the British were in the offing, and it was uncertain whether Georgia or South Carolina was the object, President Lowndes hesitated to distribute the scanty supply of arms South Carolina had secured till the designs of the British were developed.¹ And well might he do so, for these North Carolina troops thus hurriedly raised were no better disciplined than our own. Indeed, Moultrie writes that in this respect the North Carolina continentals themselves were as bad.²

On the 27th of December Moultrie marched from Charlestown with North and South Carolina troops amounting to about twelve hundred men and arrived at Purrysburg January 3, 1779. General Howe was relieved of command and ordered to join the army under Washington, in which he served with honor for the rest of the war. The remnants of Howe's army joined Lincoln at Purrysburg. The continentals were stationed there and the North Carolinians about two miles off.³ Here, also, Lincoln was joined by Richardson, but the latter could scarcely prevail upon the men to stay until relief arrived.⁴ Four or five hundred more North Carolinians came in by the 14th. But the whole force did not exceed twenty-five hundred men in camp.⁵

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 9.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 270.

³ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 265.



CHAPTER XVI

1779

A CORRESPONDENCE which took place between General Moultrie and Colonel Charles Pinckney, then President of the Senate of South Carolina, gives us an insight into the condition of affairs at that time, which was indeed deplorable. The relation between the Continental Congress and the States was undefined and uncertain, and hence the authority of the action of Congress and of its officers was a matter of question. Militia drawn from a divided people necessarily included men of all shades of political opinion, and consequently many who were opposed to the State government under which they were called out and enlisted. There was dissension among the officers and mutiny among the men. A flagrant instance of breach of discipline brought about a crisis. One of Colonel Kershaw's men upon guard having deserted his post, and behaved with insolence to his Captain, upon being arrested seized a gun and threatened the life of the officer, and was indeed only prevented from killing him by being overpowered by the guard. And now comes, as General Moultrie writes, the grand affair. The case was one of mutiny, punishable by all military law with death. Colonel Kershaw so regarded it and applied to General Lincoln for a court-martial to try the offender. The court was accordingly ordered, of which General Richardson was appointed President, with other officers of the militia as members. But when the court met the

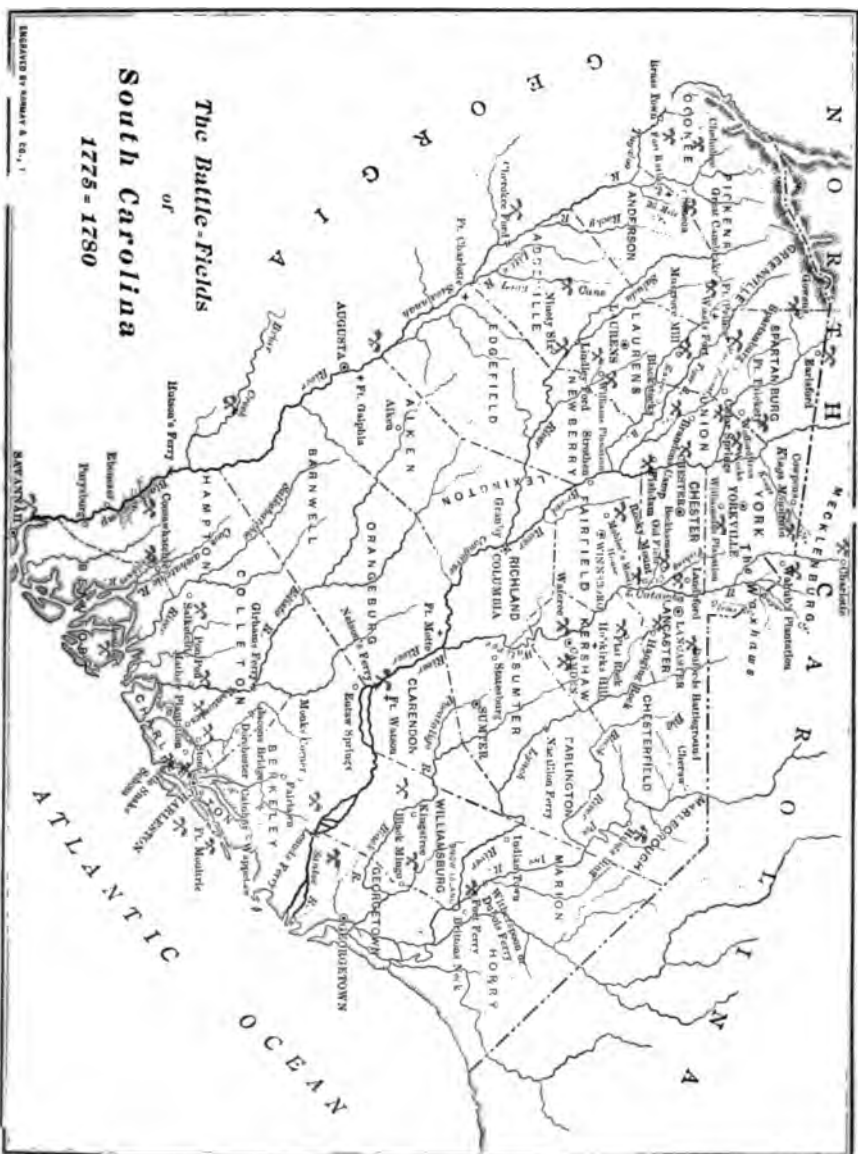
militia officers refused to take the oath prescribed in articles of war by the Continental Congress, taking the position that militiamen were not amenable to any but the militia law of the State. Seven of the members of the court refusing to qualify, the matter was reported to General Lincoln, who was much surprised. He insisted that as the militia were in continental pay, they must be subject to continental discipline. This did not necessarily follow, but Lincoln was on strong ground when he determined that if not subject to his discipline, they were not under his command, and might go off when they pleased, as he would furnish them with no more provision. The correspondence shows that Moultrie and Pinckney agreed with the position taken by the militia officers that the continental articles of war were without authority as to the militia of the State until sanctioned or adopted by the General Assembly of the State. Colonel Pinckney approves the recommendation of General Moultrie of filling up the continental battalions of the State, and says that the militia law will undergo some material amendment, "but," he adds, "will not take such military strides with respect to extraordinary powers as some of our high flyers expect."¹ The General Assembly when it met did what it could to reconcile the regular regiments in the continental service, but it could not have been expected that good men would be willing to enlist in a body upon which the legislature had cast such a stigma as to prescribe service in it as a punishment for crime and vagrancy.

Colonel Pinckney writes again to General Moultrie on the 29th of January, that the bill for the better regulation of the militia was before the House of Representatives, "but with respect to the militia being subject to the articles of

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 278.

war, I believe this will never be submitted to." He adds : "I am sorry the General thinks the militia will be of no service without being subject to the articles of war, and therefore intends to stop their provisions. You know, my friend, on former occasions they have rendered essential service to their country under the present regulations . . . do not think of bringing freemen to the halter, or perhaps the receipt of a bullet by sentence of a court-martial for practices which they cannot conceive are crimes ; the punishment is more than adequate to the offence, and therefore highly improper in the case of freemen who have never formally and voluntarily resigned the rights of citizens to the benefits of civil law, as is the case of the soldier in the regular service." But how was the war to be carried on if, on the one hand, in the eyes of the State itself the ranks of the regular regiments were not too good for vagabonds and criminals, and, on the other, the militia were to be held above subjection to military law ? How different it was when, eighty years after, the State of South Carolina seceded from the Federal Union ! Her young men then of the highest social position, the descendants of these very gentlemen, young men of wealth, of refinement, and of the highest education, hesitated not a moment to enter the ranks of her regiments as privates and enlisted men, and to subject themselves to the most stringent articles of war. They asked for no regulars to fight their battles. They murmured not at any discipline, however rigorous, which made them the better soldiers to fight for their State.¹ The hearts of the Carolinians of 1860 were in the

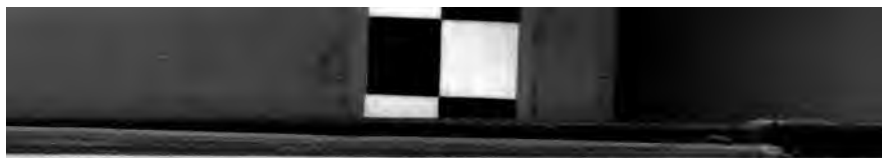
¹ In the First South Carolina Volunteers—a regiment first organized by the convention of the State which passed the ordinance of secession, and in August, 1861, enlisted for the whole war between the States,—in which regiment the author of this work had the honor to serve—at the battle of Cold Harbor, June 27, 1862, the whole color-guard fell under



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war, I believe this will never be submitted to." He adds : " I am sorry the General thinks the militia will be of no service without being subject to the articles of war, and therefore intends to stop their provisions. You know, my friend, on former occasions they have rendered essential service to their country under the present regulations . . . do not think of bringing freemen to the halter, or perhaps the receipt of a bullet by sentence of a court-martial for practices which they cannot conceive are crimes ; the punishment is more than adequate to the offence, and therefore highly improper in the case of freemen who have never formally and voluntarily resigned the rights of citizens to the benefits of civil law, as is the case of the soldier in the regular service." But how was the war to be carried on if, on the one hand, in the eyes of the State itself the ranks of the regular regiments were not too good for vagabonds and criminals, and, on the other, the militia were to be held above subjection to military law ? How different it was when, eighty years after, the State of South Carolina seceded from the Federal Union ! Her young men then of the highest social position, the descendants of these very gentlemen, young men of wealth, of refinement, and of the highest education, hesitated not a moment to enter the ranks of her regiments as privates and enlisted men, and to subject themselves to the most stringent articles of war. They asked for no regulars to fight their battles. They murmured not at any discipline, however rigorous, which made them the better soldiers to fight for their State.¹ The hearts of the Carolinians of 1860 were in the

¹ In the First South Carolina Volunteers—a regiment first organized by the convention of the State which passed the ordinance of secession, and in August, 1861, enlisted for the whole war between the States,—in which regiment the author of this work had the honor to serve—at the battle of Cold Harbor, June 27, 1862, the whole color-guard fell under



cause of the war; but as late as 1779 the hearts of their forefathers generally had not been in that of the Revolution. Their zeal and their fire were yet to be aroused by the conduct — not the cause — of their invaders, and when aroused by treachery and cruelty, they were to throw aside the aid of regulars and to fight their own battles, and readily and without question to obey and follow leaders who were yet to arise from their own people.

In the meanwhile General Prévost had made his way through Georgia and formed a junction with Colonel Campbell's force at Savannah. On his route he had invested Sunbury, which after some resistance had surrendered with forty pieces of cannon, a quantity of ammunition, and two hundred and twelve prisoners. Prévost had arrived at Savannah about the middle of January; but Campbell had not idly waited for him there. He was one of those commanders who believe in striking quickly and immediately following up any success gained. Having secured Savannah, he at once set out for Augusta. The people of the interior of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina were known to be much more strongly affected to the British government than those on the coast; and Campbell's purpose was to establish himself at Augusta and from that point to operate in the rear, as it were, of the Revolutionists in the Lower Country. Upon the approach of Campbell, General Williamson, who had been posted with militia at Augusta, retreated and crossed the river

the fire of Sykes' division of United States regulars. This guard was composed almost exclusively of men bearing the most historic names of the State. Of the thirty soldiers from the old historic St. Philip's Church, Charleston, who were killed or died of disease in the service, whose names are inscribed on a tablet in the vestibule of the church, twenty were from the rank and file of the Confederate army. Of these there were two Middletons, two Pinckneys, two Heywards, two Manigaults, a Prioleau, a Shubrick Hayne, a Washington Allston, a Ferguson, and a Gibbs.

into South Carolina. Here, as well as at Savannah, the inhabitants flocked in and took the oath of allegiance, and were formed into companies under the King with officers of their own choice.¹

A part of this expedition under Lieutenant Colonel Campbell consisted of the battalion of North Carolina Royalists, under Lieutenant Colonel John Hamilton. Colonel Hamilton had seen much service. He was a Scotchman who had fought at Culloden, a man of large fortune and high social position. He was beloved by his troops and respected by his opponents, to whom he was generous and humane.² This officer Colonel Campbell detached toward the frontier of Georgia with two hundred mounted infantry, to encourage such of the inhabitants as were attached to the British government, and to disarm the disaffected. In his progress, however, Colonel Campbell soon discovered that he could not trust to the profession of all who came in to take the oath of allegiance: some came only for the purpose of obtaining information of his strength and future designs. But every effort to check the advance of this officer proved ineffectual, and emboldened by him a number of Loyalists in the interior parts of North Carolina had embodied themselves under a Colonel Boyd and attempted to force their way into Georgia and to form a junction with him. Andrew Pickens, a name to become illustrious in the history of South Carolina, now for the first time appears a leader. We have seen him as a lieutenant in the Cherokee War, and as a captain of militia at Ninety-Six, and member of the General Assembly; but now he assumes a position of consequence and command, which from this time forth he was to maintain. To oppose Hamilton and

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 106; Lee's *Memoirs*, 120.

² Wheeler's *Reminiscences*, 214.

prevent Boyd's junction with him, Colonel Pickens assembled his militia, and with five hundred men from the District of Ninety-Six attacked Colonel Hamilton. Unable to make any impression on him, Pickens turned against Boyd's command and came up with them at Kettle Creek, where an action took place which lasted three-quarters of an hour and resulted in the death of Boyd and the total rout of his party. About three hundred of them, however, keeping together, found means to join the British army. The rest were dispersed, some flying back to North Carolina, others into South Carolina, where they threw themselves upon the mercy of their countrymen. Among these men who had collected under the specious name of Loyalists, were great numbers of the most infamous characters,—a plundering banditti, more solicitous for booty than for the honor and interest of their Royal master. As they had marched through the settlements, they had appropriated to their own use every kind of property they could take. Those taken were tried under the direction of the courts of the new government, and seventy were condemned to die for treason; but the sentence of the court was executed on only five of the principals, the rest were pardoned. It was alleged, and no doubt with truth, that these men had committed great atrocities for which they deserved to die. But they were not tried and condemned as ordinary criminals: all the accounts agree that they were hanged for treason against the new government, not for murder or pillage.¹ Let us recollect this when we come to like executions by the British authorities.

Colonel Campbell having received orders to retreat from Augusta, recalled the detachment from his frontiers, and about the middle of February retired down the Savannah

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 15; Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 108.



by easy marches, until he reached Hutson's Ferry. There he left the advance of the British army under Lieutenant Colonel Prévost, and returned to Savannah to establish civil orders previous to his departure for England. A conqueror at Savannah, says Garden, his immediate care was to soften the asperities of war and to reconcile to his equitable government those who had submitted in the first instance to the superiority of his arms. Though but lately released from close and vigorous confinement, which he had suffered in consequence of indignities offered to General Charles Lee while a prisoner at New York, he harbored no resentments, and appeared to consider his case rather the effect of necessity than of wilful persecution. Colonel Campbell had too nice a sense of honor to be made the instrument of injustice and oppression, and he was speedily called to relinquish his command to a superior less scrupulous and better disposed to second the harsh measures of the commander-in-chief.¹

The Royal army at Savannah having now been reënfined by the junction of the troops from St. Augustine, Prévost availing himself of his naval aid and of the interior navigation made lodgement on the island of Port Royal with two hundred men under Major Gardiner. On the 2d of February, 1799, General Moultrie with General Bull and about three hundred militia crossed the river and attacked and drove the British from the island. In this engagement General Moultrie had but nine regular soldiers, but he had with him a portion of the Charlestown battalion of artillery, which was no doubt the very best fighting material in the service. This was the élite corps Christopher Gadsden had organized and drilled. It had now been increased to a battalion of two companies under the command of Major Thomas Grimball, with Thomas Hey-

¹ Garden's *Anecdotes*, 277.

ward, Jr., and Edward Rutledge, two of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, both still members of Congress, as Captains.¹ On the 15th of January President Lowndes had issued orders to Major Grimball to detach fifty men from his battalion, with two field-pieces, to join General Lincoln. A meeting of the officers was called, when it was resolved to turn out the battalion and read the orders to ascertain if volunteers sufficient would offer for the service; if not, then to draw. The battalion turned out on the 16th, and instead of fifty, eighty volunteered and were accepted under the command of Captains Edward Rutledge and Thomas Heyward, Jr. It was indeed to this corps that the success of the expedition was chiefly due. Heyward and Rutledge and Captain John Barnwell of the militia distinguished themselves in the action. Captain Heyward was wounded, and Lieutenant Wilkins was killed. The British lost almost all their officers. The Americans had eight men killed and twenty-two wounded. General Lee in his *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department* observes that the object of the occupation of Port Royal, on the part of Prévost, could not then be ascertained, nor has it since been developed.²

¹ This corps was the only regularly organized corps in South Carolina which was organized upon the basis of the volunteers on either side during the war between the States.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776*, 123.

List of killed or wounded at the action near Beaufort, February 9, 1799:—

Killed: Lieutenant Benjamin Wilkins, John Fraser, John Craig, John Williams, Alexander Douglass, Charles Smith, James Heathcott, Joseph Solomon.

Wounded: Honorable Captain Thomas Heyward, Captain Thomas McLaughlin, Lieutenant Brown, Lieutenant Sawyer, John Calvert, Francis Dearing, John Righton, John Lawrence, John Green, John Anthony, I. D. Miller, Anthony Watts, John Collins, Stephen Deveaux, William Rea, John Crosskeys, Michael Campbell, Ephraim Adams, Samuel Howard, John Graves, Thomas Feapue, John Oliphant. Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 391, 392. Omitted in above lists, George Jervey and John Parsons, *wounded*.

By the middle of February a very considerable body of militia had been collected, but it was in a discordant and disaffected condition and was without organization or discipline. The militia law was utterly inadequate to the occasion. The General Assembly was busy discussing how to amend it, but in doing so showed that its members either had no appreciation of the situation, or were not prepared to make any sacrifices to meet it. Ramsay, the historian, describes the act, when passed, as "a very severe militia law," by which "much heavier fines were imposed on those who either neglected to turn out or misbehaved or disobeyed orders." But an army cannot be raised or maintained by fines. Death is the only penalty which will force men to fight who do not voluntarily do so. A government which could not enforce an oath of allegiance was not in a position to enforce a militia law. While the enemy firmly fixed at Savannah were stretching their posts all the way to Augusta, Colonel Charles Pinckney, President of the Senate, one who had been a leader throughout the revolutionary movements, and was now Moultrie's chosen confidential correspondent, could even under these circumstances write : —

"It is not the danger or apprehension of danger at the present moment that should oblige a patriot to part with essential rights, and the present extraordinary proceeding puts me in mind of a spirited answer of the Commons of Great Britain to the King when they were told 'That season was very improper to debate about rights and privileges when news had been received that the enemy were to land an army in the kingdom in a few days.' The answer was to this effect if I remember right from parliamentary history, 'that if they were sure that the enemy had an army in the heart of the kingdom and were marching with hasty strides to Westminster, they would not part with one of the least rights and privileges of the people.'" .

This he admits may be going too far, but as he considers the existing militia law a very vigorous one, and

for his part he would never give his consent "to part with the constitutional freedom and liberty of the people in the mode pointed out by this before unheard-of militia bill."¹ If one in so high a position as Colonel Pinckney thought and wrote thus, it is not surprising that the men drafted in the field under this law should be mutinous. On the 10th of February Moultrie writes to Pinckney that a whole regiment of four hundred North Carolinians say their time is out and that they intend to march this day homeward;² and the next day he writes, "I sent an order for the Charlestown artillery to march to Purrysburg, but General Bull informs me they will not stay longer than the 1st of March: I fear our militia law will ruin our country; in contending too much for the liberties of the people you will enslave them at last."³ General Bull in his letter to General Moultrie tells him that when he ordered this corps—the corps *d'élite* of the army—to march to Purrysburg, it occasioned so much uneasiness and dissatisfaction that Captain Heyward thought it best to represent the matter to him and to suspend the order for their march, as he found the men were determined to disobey it, refusing to serve in any other camp but General Bull's.⁴

General Lincoln would submit no longer to this disagreeable and dangerous situation. He was then facing the enemy whose force of veteran troops was superior in number to all of his own, and they were in this mutinous condition,—disobeying every order which they did not approve, leaving their posts and guards whenever they pleased, and refusing to submit to the articles of war, though in the presence of their enemies. He determined to have nothing more to say to the militia, and turned over their

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 299, 300.

² *Ibid.*, 310. ³ *Ibid.*, 311. ⁴ *Ibid.*, 312.

command to General Moultrie in hopes that they would more readily obey his orders. But in this he was mistaken, for General Moultrie adds they still continued in their contumacy.¹ Lincoln appealed to John Rutledge, now Governor, and sent General Moultrie to him with a letter stating that every plan which had been digested for offensive operation had been rendered abortive; that many of the militia had refused to come out; that others had joined the army but for a few days and left when they thought proper, deserting even their posts with impunity; that as the militia by the resolve of the Assembly were not to be considered under the same control with the army, it was necessary that the State should act separately, and itself undertake the defence of some particular part of the country. He charged Moultrie to recommend the Governor to send fifteen hundred militia to Purrysburg so as to allow the continental troops to attempt offensive operations; or if that was not agreeable, to urge the propriety of the State taking the defence of the Upper Country. He urged that provision should be made to supply the place of the North Carolina troops, whose term of service was about to expire; that all the continentals in the forts at Charlestown should be sent to him and their place supplied with the militia and Charlestown artillery. Governor Rutledge promised to do all he could.

The different divisions of the forces in the field at this time formed several camps. One at Purrysburg, commanded by General Lincoln in person, which Moultrie estimated at between 3000 and 4000 men. One at Brier Creek, on the west side of the Savannah, — that is, in Georgia, — commanded by General Ashe of North Carolina, which Moultrie estimated at about 2300, but which

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 314.

proved to be not more than 1500 strong, 100 of which were the remnant of the Georgia continentals under Colonel Elbert, the rest North Carolina militia. One at Williamson's house on Black Swamp, east of the Savannah, in South Carolina, under General Rutherford, of 700 or 800 men. Besides these there was a body of militia of about 1200 at Augusta. All of these made a quite strong force, and General Lincoln, notwithstanding his declaration that he would have nothing more to do with the militia, determined to cross the river with the forces on this side and give the enemy battle. For this purpose he called a council of war of General Moultrie, General Ashe, and General Rutherford, who determined to march the army from Purrysburg, leaving a strong guard there to watch the enemy, join General Rutherford and cross the river, and, uniting with General Ashe, to attack the British force. At this council General Ashe assured Lincoln that he was perfectly safe where he was, that he had taken a good position on Brier Creek. This was true. His position was a good one. It was secured in his front by the creek and on his left by the river, leaving his right only exposed, but unfortunately the exposed flank was not guarded. General Prévost, anticipating Lincoln's plan, determined to attack Ashe before the junction was made, and the same plan was adopted as that by which Colonel Campbell had outmanœuvred Howe at Savannah. On the 3d of March Major Macpherson with the first battalion of the Seventy-first Regiment, and some irregulars with two field-pieces, appeared in Ashe's front and made a demonstration of crossing the Savannah. Ashe's attention was thus occupied while Lieutenant Colonel Prévost, with a detachment consisting of three grenadier companies of the Sixtieth Regiment, Sir James Baird's light infantry, the second battalion of the Seventy-first Regi-

ment, and some provincial troops and militia, amounting in the whole to 900 men, by making a circuit and crossing Brier Creek fifteen miles above where General Ashe was encamped, succeeded in getting into his rear unperceived. Colonel Elbert with his little band of continentals made a brave but ineffectual stand. Ashe's men were totally routed and dispersed, with the loss of seven pieces of artillery and almost all their arms and the whole of their ammunition and baggage. The loss of the British was only five privates killed, and one officer and ten privates wounded. The loss on the American side was very great. One hundred and fifty fell on the field of action and pursuit, 27 officers and 200 men were made prisoners, and a much greater number perished in the river. Of those who escaped only 450 rejoined Lincoln. The victory of the British was complete and its results decisive. Communications were again opened between the British posts and the frontier settlements, and the fruits of Pickens's victory all lost. The Royal government as it had existed in Georgia at the commencement of the Revolution was again established.¹

Several attempts about this time had been made to fire Charlestown. On the 20th of February several houses were burnt on Trott's Point, the present end of Hasell Street. This fire had begun in an empty house owned by one William Tweed, between two and three in the morning.² On the same day, as it happened, the General Assembly then in session passed an ordinance to prevent the withdrawal of persons from the defence of the State, by which it was enacted that if any person should attempt

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 323, 353; Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 16; Lee's *Memoirs of 1776*, 124; Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 109.

² *So. Ca. Gazette*, February 24, 1779.

to join the enemy or should actually go over to them, he should be declared guilty of treason, and upon conviction should suffer death without the benefit of clergy, and that his property should be confiscated.¹ This ordinance was published by Governor Rutledge in a proclamation. A few days after, to wit, on the 11th of March, William Tweed, together with Andrew Groundwater, John Duer, and one Remmington, were taken in attempting to go to the British. A special session of the court was held for the trial of these persons, when Remmington turned State's evidence. On the trial it appeared that Tweed was charged with carrying a very malignant letter to Colonel Innes and Colonel Campbell from a British officer, a prisoner of war in Charlestown. Groundwater's purpose, it was proved, was to take the benefit of a British proclamation and offer of pardon, which would have required him to take up arms for the King. The courtroom was crowded from the novelty of the proceeding, and at eight o'clock in the evening the jury brought in a verdict of guilty as to Tweed and Groundwater. Duer was acquitted, as he had been warned to depart from the State and was only availing himself of Tweed's offer to carry him to Georgia. Tweed and Groundwater were sentenced to be hanged. Much interest was excited in behalf of Groundwater, as he had, as captain of a small vessel, been of service in the beginning of the war in bringing in stores and necessary articles. But there appears to have been no doubt as to the fact that Tweed had set fire to his house and caused the conflagration of the 20th of February; and it was strongly suspected that Groundwater was concerned with him in this attempt to fire the town. The recollection of the great fire of the year before greatly excited the people, and Moultrie says

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. IV, 479.

that the inhabitants were so incensed against Groundwater on this account that he suffered to appease them.¹ Tweed and Groundwater were sentenced on the 11th and executed on the 15th of March. It was not every one, however, who felt easy and assured at this hanging business, which had been begun at Ninety-Six, and was now carried on in Charlestown. Nor was this apprehension of evil dissipated when the news was received of Ashe's signal defeat and rout on the 3d of March. Colonel Charles Pinckney, writing to General Moultrie on the 18th, was very despondent, and could not avoid expressing his doubts on the subject and sympathy with these unfortunate men. He writes : —

"The lives that are lost amidst the conflict in the field for contending laurels with a few bright strokes of military philosophy are easily and triumphantly got over, but alas! the unhappy who suffer publicly, perhaps from mistaken principles (as in my humble opinion two poor fellows did yesterday), the sad mortification and miseries of death amidst a gaping crowd occasion so pungent a sorrow to some dispositions that it requires much time to get the better of it."²

"Perhaps from mistaken principles!" But what if the Royal authority should be again established, and Tweed's and Groundwater's principles should turn out to be the triumphant ones! Hanging was a game that both sides could play, and the time was not long to come when the best of Carolina's stock were to suffer in the same way, "perhaps from mistaken principles," at least, so Lord Rawdon and Balfour were to hold in the days of their power.

From his camp at Orangeburgh Governor Rutledge wrote to General Williamson, ordering him to embody one thousand men from Ninety-Six District, and to

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 331; *So. Ca. Gazette*, March 17, 1779; *Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, March 18, 1779.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 354.



make incursions into Georgia whenever a favorable opportunity offered for harassing or annoying the enemy, and directing that the parties on these incursions were to destroy all the cattle, horses, and provisions they met with in Georgia. It happened that a short time before this General Lincoln had sent into Georgia privately to desire those who had remained there and could not get away, to be quiet until he could return to them, and assuring them that they should not be molested by his army. About the same time Lieutenant Colonel Prévost also sent a proposition to General Williamson to suffer these people to remain at home unmolested by either side, which proposition General Williamson sent to Governor Rutledge for his approval. This Governor Rutledge peremptorily refused, declaring it too absurd and ridiculous to require a moment's consideration, and that it only merited an answer because Williamson had promised one. General Williamson's answer should be that he was expressly enjoined not to agree to it. Instead of relaxing his efforts, he was ordered to proceed as soon as possible to put it out of the enemy's power to secure the cattle, horses, and provisions which he believed it was Prévost's object to obtain. Yet Governor Rutledge was himself soon to be proposing a neutrality, not of a part, but of the whole, of his own State. Moultrie wrote to the Governor gently protesting against this interference with the management of the war, and to Colonel Pinckney that matters were brewing which might bring on misunderstandings between the Governor and General Lincoln. A few days after, however, he writes to Pinckney that all will be well again and that there was a prospect of opening the campaign in a fortnight with success.¹ The inconvenience and danger of the conflict of

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 307-374.

authority was, nevertheless, soon again to arise and to be more seriously felt.

General Lincoln called a council of war on the 19th of April at his headquarters at Black Swamp, consisting of himself and Brigadier Generals Moultrie, Isaac Huger, and Jethro Sumner, the last of North Carolina, to consider a move he proposed into Georgia. He informed the council that the number of men in camp with those at General Williamson's camp, and five hundred promised from Orangeburgh, and seven hundred North Carolinians then in the State, amounted to five thousand men, and desired their opinion whether leaving one thousand there and at Purrysburg it would be advisable to collect the remainder near to Augusta, cross the Savannah River, and prevent, if possible, the enemy receiving supplies from the back part of the country, circumscribe their limits, and prevent their junction with the Indians. The council advised the movement, and a supply of arms and ammunition having just arrived from St. Eustatia, replacing those lost at Brier Creek, the movement was commenced.



CHAPTER XVII

1779

GENERAL LINCOLN commenced his march for Augusta on the 20th of April with about two thousand men, light troops and cavalry, leaving his baggage and artillery to follow. On the 22d he wrote to Moultrie from Augusta, ordering him to send all the continental troops with the artillery, excepting the second and fifth regiments of South Carolina ; but directing Moultrie himself to remain in his present encampment at Black Swamp — about twenty-five miles from Purrysburg — with the two regiments, second and fifth, about two hundred and twenty men under Colonel McIntosh, and Colonel Maurice Simons's brigade of Charlestown militia, in all about twelve hundred men ; and to keep the post at Purrysburg as long as it was in his power. Moultrie was instructed that if the enemy disclosed an intention to attack him and to move toward Charlestown, he was to possess himself of all the passes and to delay him as much as possible until he, Lincoln, could come up. Lincoln cautioned Moultrie that this movement should be concealed as long as possible ; it was in fact already known in the British camp while he was enjoining its secrecy. That very night a party of Indians, or people disguised as Indians, about thirty or forty in number, came through the swamp at Yeamassee above where the guard were usually placed, surprised the guard, and burned down a house and escaped unmolested. On the 24th Lincoln wrote to General Huger, who was in command of the force marching to join him, that he had just received advice that the

enemy had been strongly reënforced and intended with one body to cross the Savannah at some place above Ebenezer whilst another advanced to cross higher up, and cautioned him against surprise. Lincoln thus knew as early as the 24th that it was the intention of the enemy to cross into South Carolina; but this he regarded as only a move to counteract his and to draw him back from Georgia, or to prevent Huger from joining him with his reënforcement. This, it seems, really was the original intention of the British commander; but finding the way practically open to Charlestown, Prévost pursued it.¹

Lincoln having thus withdrawn himself with nearly all the continentals and the best part of the organized militia into Georgia, the defence of Charlestown was left to Moultrie with but a small and inadequate force for the purpose, while the difficulties of Moultrie's position were increased by the want of settled authority. For while there was no personal jealousy whatever between the State government and himself, still all his supplies of men and material had to come from the State authorities, and the want of control in these hours of emergency crippled and embarrassed his action. All this was yet more complicated by the fact that Governor Rutledge had left Charlestown and gone to concert measures with Lincoln. Moultrie's urgent communications to him were therefore turned over to the Lieutenant Governor Thomas Bee. Thus while Lincoln and Rutledge were intent upon Georgia, South Carolina was left to the care of Moultrie and Bee. The State did not, however, suffer from any want of conduct in this latter officer. Mr. Bee appears to have readily assumed the responsibility of his position, and to have acted with energy and decision in supporting Moultrie in the emergency.

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 110.



On the 28th of April General Prévost crossed over the greatest part of his army into South Carolina. Lieutenant Colonel McIntosh with his small garrison at Purrysburg retreated at once to Coosahatchie, and there he was joined on the 30th by Moultrie, the two commands scarcely amounting to twelve hundred men. Moultrie immediately sent dispatches to Lincoln and to the Governor at Orangeburgh and to Lieutenant Governor Bee at Charlestown. He wrote to Lincoln informing him that he would impede the enemy's march as much as possible, and saying that if Lincoln could spare him one thousand men, he thought he could prevent the enemy reaching the town. On the 1st of May Moultrie moved his camp to Tullifiny Hill, a much more eligible place at which to make a stand, and with Mr. Thomas Heyward, Sr., a gentleman of that neighborhood, reconnoitred the country. It was a very dry season and the river very low, allowing several fording places. At all of these Moultrie placed small guards to give notice of the enemy's approach. A rear-guard of one hundred men was left at Coosahatchie. Having determined to make a stand at Tullifiny Hill, Moultrie took up a position there, having his few horsemen reconnoitring the country in every direction. The enemy at the time were encamped about ten miles from him.

Determining on the 3d of May to draw in the detachment from Coosahatchie, Moultrie had given an order to one of his aides to bring them in; but Colonel John Laurens, who had joined him two days before, requesting to be permitted to go on the service, Moultrie readily consented, esteeming himself fortunate in having so brave and experienced an officer for the duty. For this purpose a body of three hundred and fifty men, one-fourth of his little army, was committed to Colonel Laurens. This youthful officer intrusted with so considerable a command, ambi-



tious to do more than merely bring off a rear-guard, unfortunately exceeded his orders, very imprudently crossed the river to the east side, and brought on an engagement in which he lost a number of men killed and wounded, and was himself wounded. Captain Shubrick, upon whom the command then devolved, immediately withdrew, and it was well that he did so: had he not, the whole party would have been captured by the advancing enemy. As soon as Moultrie had recovered this party he commenced a retreat, fearing to risk an engagement after the discouragement of Colonel Laurens's unfortunate affair. He marched off in good order and reached Salkehatchie Chapel that night. The British encamped at Pocotaligo five miles in Moultrie's rear. Very much disappointed at Colonel Laurens's conduct, which he considered necessitated the abandonment of the position he had taken with the intention of engaging the enemy, Moultrie continued his retreat, destroying the bridges as he passed over them and obstructing the advance of the enemy as best he could, all the while dispatching message after message to Lincoln, to Governor Rutledge at Orangeburgh, to Lieutenant Governor Bee and Colonel Pinckney at Charlestown. But Lincoln could not be persuaded of the danger to the town. He regarded Prévost's invasion of South Carolina as only intended to allure him from Georgia, where he was bent upon remaining in order to cover an attempt to set up a government in Augusta, where an effort was being made to assemble a convention. On the 6th of May Moultrie writes to him from Ashepoo, saying he had written a number of letters telling him of the movement against Charlestown, but had received no reply except that he would send him a reënforcement of picked continentals, which Moultrie added must be very strong to be of any service. He pressed that Lin-

coln should come at once with all possible dispatch, else the enemy would reach the town before he did so. The numbers of Prévost's force he estimated at four thousand. Lincoln had at last partly awakened to the danger, and on the same day had written to Moultrie that he was on his way down on the west side of the Savannah so as to divert the attention of the enemy, but that if the enemy meant anything serious against Charlestown, he would recross the river and come to his assistance. In the meanwhile he thought that as Moultrie was in possession of strong passes, he would with the force he had be able to stop their progress and give him time to come up.

Moultrie had intended to make a stand at Ashepoo, but his little army instead of increasing was daily diminishing. His force consisted chiefly of the militia of General Bull's district, that from which they were so precipitately retreating, and the British were burning and destroying as they came. Every one, wrote Moultrie, is running to look after his family and property. The enemy carry everything before them with fire and sword. On the 7th of May Moultrie halted his troops at Dorchester, twenty-four miles from Charlestown, to which place he himself went with his suite. There he was received with great joy, but found everything in the greatest turmoil. Confusion and consternation, indeed, he says, had taken possession of the whole country. Five different bodies of troops were marching to the town, but without any common purpose. Moultrie, himself, was retreating upon it as fast as possible, at first with twelve hundred men, but as Skirving's and Garden's regiments of militia belonged to the country they were abandoning, the men of these regiments left him, to take care of their families, and his force was reduced to six hundred before he got into the town. The British army under Prévost was

close in pursuit of him. Lincoln with his force of four thousand was marching, but slowly, to come up with the British. Governor Rutledge with six hundred militia was hastening to get to town, lest he should be shut out, and Colonel Harris of Georgia with a detachment of two hundred and fifty continentals was pushing on with all possible dispatch to reënforce him. The troops under Moultrie marched into town, on the 9th. Governor Rutledge with his party of militia and Colonel Harris with his continentals also got in about the same time. Pulaski with a small party of cavalry from Washington's army had come over from Haddrell's Point on the 8th. His infantry came in on the 11th; but all together they did not number more than one hundred and twenty-five men.

Charlestown, as is well known, is situated at the end of a narrow neck of land, the confluence of two rivers, the Cooper on the east and the Ashley on the west; these rivers uniting form the harbor which opens into the ocean. On the north side of the harbor lies Sullivan's Island, on which was Fort Moultrie, the scene of the great battle of the 28th of June, 1776, and on the south Fort Johnson. The battle of Fort Moultrie had led to the belief that the town was all but impregnable on the sea front, and very little preparation had been made on the land side; but during Moultrie's retreat a large number of negroes had been put to work on the lines in the rear of the town, and these had been somewhat strengthened, but they were still very weak, not more than three or four feet thick in some parts, nor were the parapets completed. The Ashley River, however, which lay between the town and the country through which Prévost was advancing, though not as wide as the Cooper, was yet a bold, broad river for several miles, and so Prévost, having no boats, was obliged to cross it at Ashley Ferry, twelve



miles above Charlestown, which he then must approach by marching down Charlestown neck, a peninsula for six miles from the town not a mile wide. The possession of Ashley Ferry, therefore, was essential to his safety, and the only way for his retreat if necessary. Moultrie, as we have seen, had halted his troops at Dorchester, which lies twenty-four miles from the town, a point considerably beyond the commencement of the peninsula of Charlestown neck. From this point he fell back upon the town.

This movement was a very false one upon Moultrie's part—a mistake which was to be repeated the next year by Lincoln with disastrous consequences. He should have taken position and given battle to Prévost at Ashley Ferry. He had reached Dorchester, twelve miles from the ferry, on the 7th, and did not move his troops into the town until the 9th. The British reached Ashley Ferry only on the evening of the 10th. Moultrie had three days then within which to take position and strengthen himself to resist Prévost's crossing. Prévost had no boats and so must depend upon those he could secure when he reached the river. These Moultrie should have seized in advance. If he could not resist Prévost crossing the river, it was quite certain he could not resist him behind the weak lines of the town; and if Prévost defeated him at Ashley Ferry, he at least might have saved his army, for he would have had the open country through which to retreat and await a junction with Lincoln, while Prévost would scarcely have dared to move down the narrow neck between the Cooper and Ashley, leaving him to unite with Lincoln in his rear, and to capture him in the town. On the other hand, by leaving Prévost to cross the river without molestation and falling back down the peninsula, he risked the loss of his army as well as that of the town. If defeated behind the weak lines which had been so hastily thrown

MAP of CHARLESTON, S.C.
1779.

CHARLESTON RIVER

ROAD TO CHARLESTON

CEMENT'S FERRY RD

STATE ROAD

MAY'S FERRY

COOPER

CHARLESTON



up, there was nothing left but the surrender of his whole force; there was no way of escape. There was, too, another urgent reason why he should have preferred to deliver battle in the field, and that was that he would expose himself to an additional and great evil in submitting himself to a siege of the town. He would subject not only his troops, but the defenceless men, women, and children of the town to the dangers of battle and the horrors of an assault and storm, the dreaded terrors of which were so likely to bring about the interference of the civil authorities and to weaken the resolution of his men and of himself.

But disregarding these considerations he marched into the town, and on May 10 he placed the troops along the lines. The Charlestown militia occupied the right extending from the half-moon battery on the Cooper River side to the centre. The country militia were to occupy the left wing. The Charlestown Artillery were on the right, and the artillery—a part of the Fourth Continental Regiment—commanded by Colonel Roberts were on the left; Lieutenant Colonel McIntosh took post with the Fifth Regiment in the redoubt on the right of the line, and Lieutenant Colonel Marion, with one hundred men of the Second Regiment, in that on the left. The advanced redoubt on the left was occupied by Colonel Harris's detachment. The remainder of the Second Regiment with General Pulaski's infantry occupied the half moon in the centre and were to sally out from time to time, as the service might require.¹

On the 10th of May the British army reached Ashley Ferry in the evening, and having passed the river without opposition, appeared before the lines of Charlestown on the morning of the 11th.² Upon their appearance, Pulaski

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 413.

² Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 112.



with his legion and some militia had a skirmish with the advance guard, in which he was overpowered and lost most of his infantry, killed and wounded and prisoners. Among the killed was Colonel Kowatch, who had come with him. It was with difficulty that any of this party got back into the lines. This skirmish took place near the Nightingale race-course, which, as we have seen, was laid out in 1754, a little above and east of the present Line and Meeting streets.¹ The rest of the day was spent in other skirmishing without particular result. The enemy advanced in the afternoon as far as Watson's house, which was situated in the square now bounded by Line, Meeting, Columbus, and King streets;² but Moultrie opened upon them with his cannon at the gate of the town, which stopped their progress.

But now the evils of the want of a settled and acknowledged authority began again to appear, and resulted at once in a fatal accident. About ten o'clock, or sooner, says Moultrie, it being very dark, some of the people on the right imagined they saw the enemy approaching, upon which a few shots were fired, and immediately the firing ran almost through the lines with cannon, field-pieces, and musketry, by which unfortunate mistake Major Benjamin Huger was killed, and twelve others were either killed or wounded. Major Huger was a brave and active officer, an able counsellor, and a virtuous citizen. This party, without Moultrie's direction or knowledge, had been sent out of the lines to stop a gap which had been left open for a passage through the abatis.

While the General Congress had organized a Continental army and appointed generals to command it, and the State had turned over to the army her regular regi-

¹ *Address of Gen. Wilmot G. De Saussure*, Cincinnati Society, 1885.

² *Ibid.*

ment, there does not appear to have been any provision made in regard to the militia when serving with the continental troops. The result of this as now happened was a divided authority at the most critical moment. On this occasion it appears that the Governor's orders were carried about by some of his aides in this confused and indefinite manner, "You are to obey the orders of the Governor, of General Moultrie, and of the Privy Council." Moultrie overheard such an order as he was riding in haste through the gate of the town, and without stopping turned around and cried aloud, "No orders from the Privy Council are to be obeyed." Such orders were, however, delivered to many along the lines. They were so delivered to Colonel McIntosh, who at once refused to receive any but from the General. Things were in this awkward position with the enemy close upon the lines when Moultrie, learning of the accident by which Major Huger and his men had been killed and wounded, much vexed, demanded to know "who gave the orders for those men to go without the lines?" Some one replied, "The Governor." But this the Governor denied, though he maintained that it was his right to command the militia. General Moultrie then addressed himself to the Governor and Council, who were all together: "Gentlemen," he said, "this will never do; we shall be ruined and undone if we have so many commanders; it is absolutely necessary to choose one to command: if you leave the command to me, I will not interfere in any civil matters you may do with the enemy, such as 'parlies, capitulations,' etc. I will attend only to the military department."¹ Upon this Moultrie says the Governor and Council unanimously chose him to command.

This certainly discloses a most unfortunate condition

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 426.



of affairs — the commander in a besieged town chosen at the gate with the enemy only a few hundred yards distant. But still more extraordinary was the arrangement made, for the command was not even yet entirely conceded to the military officer, but by Moultrie's own suggestion all such matters as "parlies and capitulations" were reserved for the Governor and Council. That is, the Governor and Council were to have the power to call a halt at any time if they considered the fight waxing too hot. It is, indeed, hard to read Moultrie's own account of this affair without an impression that he was not himself altogether averse to a parley with the enemy, though unwilling to assume its responsibility; and this impression is strengthened by the account of it found in the Laurens manuscript.¹ Moultrie narrates that about three o'clock in the morning, it being still very dark, he heard some person inquiring for him, and was told that the Governor wanted to see him; upon which he rode up to the Governor, who took him aside and asked him "whether we had not best have a parley with the enemy; and whether we were able to resist their force?" and asked about the number of our men. I assured him, says Moultrie, that they were upward of twenty-two hundred men, at least. He says in a note that he guessed this number, but that he had not then a full return. The Governor replied that he did not think they had more than eighteen hundred men; that the enemy's force, as he was informed, was seven or eight thousand, at least; that should they force the lines, a great number of citizens would be put to death. He represented to Moultrie the horrors of a storm, told him that the State's engineer, Colonel Senf, had reported that the lines were in a very weak state. After some conversation the Governor pro-

¹ MSS., So. Ca. Hist. Soc.

posed the sending out a flag to know what terms they could obtain. Moultrie says he told the Governor he thought they could stand against the enemy; that he did not think the enemy could force the lines; that he did not choose to send a flag in his name, but that if the Governor chose to do so, and would call his Council together, he would send any message. This was standing to the compact made at the gate the evening before. But, nevertheless, the message was sent in Moultrie's own name. The message sent was delivered by Mr. Kinloch, General Moultrie's aide, and was as follows:—

“General Moultrie, perceiving from the motions of your army that your intention is to besiege the town, would be glad to know on what terms you would be disposed to grant a capitulation should he be inclined to capitulate.”

General Prévost returned his answer about eleven o'clock that day, the 11th. In view of what followed, it is of consequence to give it in full. It was signed by Lieutenant Colonel J. M. Prévost, the General's brother commanding the advance, and was as follows:—

“Sir, The humane treatment which the inhabitants of Georgia and this province, have hitherto received, will, I flatter myself, induce you to accept of the offers of peace and protection, which I now make by the orders of General Prévost; the evils and horrors attending the event of a storm, (which cannot fail to be successful) are too evident, not to induce a man of humane feelings, to do all in his power to prevent it: you may depend, that every attention shall be paid, and every necessary measure be adopted to prevent disorders; and that such of the inhabitants, who may not chuse to receive the generous offers of peace and protection, may be received as prisoners of war, and their fate decided by that of the rest of the colonies. Four hours shall be allowed for an answer; after which, your silence or the detention of the bearer of this, will be deemed a positive refusal.”



On the receipt of this letter General Moultrie showed it to the Governor, who immediately summoned his Council to meet at his own house, and requested that Moultrie would attend and bring Count Pulaski with him. Colonel John Laurens was also sent for. General Moultrie, in the meanwhile, ordered Colonel Cambray, the engineer, to work upon the left of the lines as fast as possible, as that part was very incomplete. He also ordered ammunition to be brought up from the town to the lines. The Council thus assembled consisted, as we have seen, of the Governor John Rutledge, the Lieutenant Governor Thomas Bee, Colonel Charles Pinckney (Moultrie's correspondent), Christopher Gadsden, Roger Smith (the Governor's brother-in-law), Thomas Ferguson (Christopher Gadsden's brother-in-law), John Edwards, John Neufville (who had been chairman of the joint committee of non-importers in 1769-70), Colonel Isaac Motte, and John Parker. On the meeting of the Council, the letter of Colonel Prévost, containing the General's terms upon which he would receive a capitulation, was read, and the matter of giving up the town was warmly discussed. General Moultrie says that Count Pulaski, Colonel Laurens, and himself advised against capitulation; that being asked as to his numbers, he gave the Governor an account of corps by corps, writing a memorandum of them on the back of Colonel Prévost's letter which they were discussing. They amounted, he says, to 3180 at the lowest computation.¹

¹ List given by Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 420:—

Charlestown militia	780	Two Continental regiments	300	} Cont- nentials.
Grimball's artillery	150	Col. Harris's detachment	250	
French	50	Col. Beckham's artillery	60	
Bull's brigade	400	Col. McIntosh's regiment	190	
Col. Neal's regiment	150	Pulaski's and Racoon	200	
Simons's brigade	600	Sailors	50	
			<hr/>	
			3180	

He had estimated, he says, more in some of the corps, but it would not be allowed him. The Governor was sure there must be some mistake ; he did not think there were more than 2500 men in the lines.

There were certainly mistakes in these estimates in some instances, as appears from Moultrie's own account. For instance, he puts down "Pulaski's and Racoon, 200." Now, Pulaski, he has just told us the day before, "paraded his legion (about *one hundred and twenty* and some militia), and attacked the advance of the British troops . . . but he was soon overpowered ; in the skirmish he lost his Colonel (Kowatch) killed, and *most of his infantry* killed and wounded and prisoners." On a page or two further, he says that on his retreat from Black Swamp, Colonel Senf, from the Governor's Camp Orangeburgh, joined him at Ponpon Bridge "with the Racoon company, commanded by Captain John Allston, of *about fifty* men on horseback."¹ These two corps, therefore, originally were but 170 strong, and Pulaski had lost a greater part of his the day before, and yet Moultrie now puts the two together at 200. This, of course, makes but a small difference in the total strength of the army ; but it is of importance in weighing the evidence of Moultrie's estimates as to the strength of the force in Charlestown, about which Governor Rutledge and himself differed so widely. It is manifest that Moultrie's figures were mere estimates, and not based upon returns made upon an actual count. No such actual returns would have resulted in even numbers of hundreds and fifties, in every instance. Indeed, he says, "I had mentioned more in some corps, but it would not be allowed me." Again, in the account which he gives, on May 8, of the various bodies marching to Charlestown, he puts Governor Rutledge's force from

¹ *Memoirs*, vol. I, 432.



Orangeburgh at about 600 militia.¹ Colonel Neal's regiment had formed a part of that force;² but in this estimate he puts this regiment as a distinct body at 150, and Colonel Simons' brigade, which came with Governor Rutledge, at 600, making Governor Rutledge's force 750. There is difficulty also in regard to his estimate of the Continental troops. By Lincoln's order he had, on the 24th of April, sent all the Continental troops excepting his detachment of the Second and Fifth regiments, amounting to 220 men, to Augusta. Upon his urgent messages, Lincoln had dispatched Colonel Harris with a detachment of 250 Continentals which had come in. This would give him 470 Continentals, but he puts the continental troops present at 800. May not General Moultrie have been mistaken in these estimates, as he undoubtedly was in the instances of Pulaski's and the Raccoon corps? His detailed estimates certainly do not settle the difference between Governor Rutledge and himself, as to the strength of the troops upon which they had to rely. Governor Rutledge's estimate of 2500 men was probably nearer the truth.

General Moultrie had been sadly deficient in cavalry. He complained in his letter to Governor Rutledge on the 3d of May that if he had only 100 horsemen he could stop the progress of the enemy; but Major John Barnwell with about 20 horse was all that he had until he reached Dorchester, where he met Colonel Horry with some of his newly raised regiment of Light Dragoons, which gave him in all 150 horse. The absence of cavalry left him without the means of ascertaining the strength of the enemy's force, which was accordingly greatly exaggerated. The Governor and Council were alarmed by reports which told them that the enemy

¹ *Memoirs*, vol. I, 412.

² *Ibid.*, 370.

had 7000 or 8000 men. But this Moultrie did not credit; and a gentleman who had been reconnoitring with a party of horse, having been asked his opinion respecting the number of the enemy, gave them to the Governor, corps by corps, from the information he had received, which account was taken down by the Governor on the back of the same letter that came from Colonel Prévost.¹ This gentleman also said that besides those taken down by the Governor a great many Tories from North and South Carolina and Georgia had joined them. He would not, however, contradict Moultrie's estimate, that there could not be more than 4000 at most. Moultrie was more correct in the estimate of the British force than he was of his own; the force under Prévost was really much less than he thought. It amounted in fact to about 2400,² but this included some of the best troops in the British army.

While this discussion was going on at the Governor's house Captain Dunbar of the Second Regiment came in great haste to inform Moultrie that General Prévost had observed that the work on the lines was continued during the passing of the flags, and sent to say that if it was not immediately stopped he would march his troops in. Moultrie stopped the working and urged the Governor and Council to conclude upon something; but it was not

¹ This estimate was as follows:—

Royal Scotch High-		Troops from Augusta	900
landers	1300 or 1500	New York volunteers	
Hessians	500 or 700	Light horse	400
Royal Americans . .	200	Indians	120
De Lancey's First			
and Sixteenth . . .	200		
			3620

— Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 430.

² Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 112.



until the next day, the 12th, during which time, strange to say, General Prévost waited for an answer, that they at length resolved that he should send the following message : —

“Sir: I cannot possibly agree to so dishonorable a proposal as is contained in your favor of yesterday; but if you will appoint an officer to confer on terms, I will send one to meet him at such time and place as you fix on.”

Prévost refused to confer in this way, and the Council was called again to consider what should be done.

A discussion ensued, upon which the following message was ultimately determined upon : ¹ —

“To propose a neutrality during the war between Great Britain and America, and the question whether the State shall belong to Great Britain or remain one of the United States, be determined by the treaty of peace between those two powers.”

Among the Laurens manuscripts now in the possession of the South Carolina Historical Society, there is another account of what took place.² By this account the Governor laid before the Council the strength of the enemy and the situation of the garrison. Major Butler,³ the Adjutant General of the State, said that the enemy must be between 7000 and 8000 men, and specified the par-

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 433; Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 27.

² The Laurens manuscript account is in two pieces — one a fragment in the handwriting of John Laurens himself; the other in the handwriting of his father, who at this time was, however, in Philadelphia in attendance upon Congress. John Laurens was killed, August 25, 1782, so this account was probably given by him to his father before his death, and is therefore probably nearly a contemporaneous account.

³ Major Pierce Butler, formerly of the Twenty-ninth Royal Regiment, who had married a daughter of Colonel Thomas Middleton, and resigned and settled in South Carolina, afterward member of the convention which framed the Constitution of the United States, and one of the first senators from this State.

ticular corps. Colonel Senf, the engineer of the State, gave it as his opinion that the lines were indefensible, and stated that that was also the opinion of Du Cambray, the French engineer; but this Du Cambray, who was not present, afterward, it is said, denied. General Moultrie was then desired to give the Council a return of the garrison, which he did, specifying the different corps, which amounted to 3080, and added that he believed this was the lowest computation. Governor Rutledge said that Moultrie's estimate was impossible. He, however, desired the opinions of Moultrie, Pulaski, and Laurens, who declared their belief that they were able to fight and to beat the enemy should they make an attack. The Governor and Council, however,—continues this account,—through timidity, apprehending and anticipating the calamities and cruelties to which the inhabitants would be exposed should the enemy succeed, or for some other consideration among themselves, determined (it is said) by 5 to 3 to make the following proposition to General Prévost:—

“That he should be permitted to take possession of it” (the town) “provided the State and Harbour should be considered as neutral during the war, the question whether it belonged to Great Britain or the United States to be waived until the conclusion of it, and that whenever that should happen whatever was granted to the other States, that” (South Carolina) “should enjoy.”

Gordon in his *History of the American Revolution* gives a version which supports this of the Laurens manuscript, viz.:—

*“That South Carolina was to remain in a state of neutrality till the close of the war, and then follow the fate of its neighbors on condition the Royal army would withdraw.”*¹

¹ Gordon's *Am. Rev.*, vol. III, 257.

Steadman in his *History of the American War* states the proposition very loosely. He says:—

“A proposal was made on their part,” that is on the part of the Americans, “for the neutrality of the province during the war, and at the end of the war its fate to be determined by the treaty of peace.”

The essential difference between the two versions of the proposition, it will be observed, is that in that of Moultrie Governor Rutledge and his Council are made not only to propose a neutrality, but to abandon the fate of South Carolina to the convenience and pleasure of Great Britain and the other States, when they should come to settle a treaty of peace between them; to leave the fate of the people of South Carolina to be bargained for and negotiated upon without reference to their wishes or interest; their disposition to be treated as one of the side issues along with the fishery question which the New Englanders were demanding as one of the terms of peace. But under the Laurens version—though John Laurens refused to be the bearer of the message—the town was not to be surrendered without substantial concessions in favor not only of South Carolina herself, but of her sister States as well, viz.: (1) That the harbor was not to be a British port, but to be regarded as a neutral one. If the town was to fall, this was an important point to be secured, for under the provision no British fleet could use its waters for warlike purposes, no prize could be brought to the town for adjudication, no prize court could sit there for condemnation and sale of captured vessels.¹ The principal object of the whole campaign, the capture of Charlestown as a base of future operations, would thus have been practically frustrated. (2) That in no case should the fate of the State of South Carolina be separated from that of the

¹ Kent's *Commentaries*, vol. I, 103 (12th ed.).



other States. She was not to be the subject of trade and barter when the war should end, but should be free or otherwise, as the result of the war should determine for her sister States. We wish that we could adopt with some degree of assurance the Laurens version of the proposition as the true one ; but while John Laurens certainly knew of its terms, we are met by the statement of Moultrie, that all the messages carried out were in his possession when he wrote.¹

There is a probable solution of the proposition of the Governor and Council to include the whole State in the terms of neutrality which we have found nowhere suggested, but which may have had great and controlling influence in the offer. Wherever the British forces had hitherto obtained possession of the country it had at once been assumed that the Royal authority was restored, and that the inhabitants were to be thenceforth regarded as of their old allegiance, and by logical consequence subjects of Great Britain, and moreover that such being the case, as subjects they were liable to military duty, and were to be enrolled as provincial militia under his Majesty, to be called upon for service against their former friends and allies. This had been done in Savannah and Augusta, and if Charlestown was taken, without condition, it would be so done here. Indeed, it was so to be attempted in South Carolina when Charlestown fell the year after. Prévost had offered that if the town would be surrendered, such of the inhabitants who might not choose to receive his offers of peace and protection might be

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 433, note, "All the messages that were carried out were signed by the gentlemen, and are now in my possession." Moultrie, however, it is to be said, is a very loose writer, and is certainly at times incorrect about matters which he should have known. He wrote in 1802, twenty odd years after these events.



received as prisoners of war, and their fate decided by that of the rest of the colonies. The Governor and Council now proposed to enlarge the scope of the offer to include all the people of South Carolina, — for with the fall of the city the fall of the rest of the State would undoubtedly follow, — but to modify the proposition so that the people should be regarded as neutrals, and hence not subject to service in the Royal militia. We can scarcely doubt that this consideration had great weight, if, indeed, it was not the controlling motive.

Ramsay says that it was presumed that Lincoln was in close pursuit of Prévost, but his situation was unknown, and that the proposition of the Governor and Council was made only to gain time. This view has been earnestly and elaborately argued by the historian, William Gilmore Simms, in a lecture delivered in New York City November, 1856,¹ and there is a well-authenticated family tradition which maintains that Governor Rutledge years after assigned the same cause for his action. We, however, have been unable to concur in that solution of the matter. Governor Rutledge may doubtless have claimed, and justly so, that the manner in which he had conducted his negotiations up to this point had saved the city by detaining Prévost a whole day before the town. Twenty-four precious and, as it turned out, decisive hours had been gained by his negotiations, and it was to these, no doubt, to which he alluded when he gloried in having saved the city, and with the city the State over which he presided. But he had now exhausted diplomacy, and no guns were heard announcing Lincoln's approach; no message through the lines had come from him. The necessity for final action had now come. It was a storm

¹ A. S. Salleys, Jr., in the *Sunday News*, Charleston, S.C., July 9, 1899.

of the city by a force believed to be overwhelming, or a surrender upon the best terms he could obtain. If the Laurens account of the terms he proposed is correct, is he to be blamed for offering them? If surrender he must, what better could he have hoped to obtain? But that the offer when made was made for acceptance or rejection by Prévost, and no longer for mere delay,—wise or unwise, honorable or improper, as it may be regarded,—must be admitted. Suppose Prévost to have promptly accepted the proposition, would not Governor Rutledge and the Council have been bound by it? And was the proposition so different from that proposed to General Williamson, shortly before, which Rutledge had rejected, or from that first made by Prévost at this time, as to have insured its rejection? The circumstances all contradict the suggestion. Had the offer been made, not in good faith, but merely for delay, would not Moultrie and Gadsden and Laurens and McIntosh, or some one of them, have been let into the design and have so understood it? That they did not so understand it is evident from their conduct. While, however, Moultrie refused to carry on the negotiations for a surrender when the responsibility was returned to him, by whom it should never have been committed to another, he cannot escape equal responsibility in the matter, for not only did he himself send the message, but there is evidence that he did not altogether discourage the Council in making the proposition. In the manuscript account by Colonel Laurens, to which we have just referred, there is this statement : —

“The Governor asked General Moultrie's opinion of the Proposition, and what he imagined the other States would think of it — who said altho' he was against it, and would not have himself or the Troops under him included, yet he thought *the other States had no reason to complain, as they had not fulfilled their engagements*

to it in giving it aid and assistance, from which promise that State came into the union."¹

There was, no doubt, a strong feeling prevailing in South Carolina that she had been abandoned to her fate by the Congress—a belief which continued until the fall of Charlestown, and for which, indeed, there was strong foundation, so strong a foundation that Congress itself felt called upon by a special resolve to deny it. To this sentiment was now added the resentment that Lincoln, who had been sent without troops, but with implied if not specific instructions to defend Charlestown, as he himself afterward claimed in his justification upon its loss, had carried off the greater part of the South Carolina continentals to Georgia, upon a rash and, as it turned out to be, a fruitless expedition, leaving the town and State open to this invasion. This feeling pervaded all ranks, affecting, even as appears from Laurens's statement, Moultrie himself.

¹ Laurens's MS., So. Ca. Hist. Soc. In Moore's *Diary of the Am. Rev.*, vol. II, 162, we find this note:—

"The following is the proposition made by Colonels Smith and McIntosh to Colonel Prévost and Captain Moncrief at a conference at Charlestown, May 12, 1779:— '*That Carolina should remain in a state of neutrality during the war, and the question whether Carolina should remain an independent State or be subject to Great Britain be determined by the fate of the war.*'

"This proposition shows in a clear point of view with what ease the people of Carolina can throw off and break their most solemn engagement with the Continental Congress and France on the approach of real danger, or whenever they think it will suit their private views. Such is the boasted virtue and honor of the inhabitants of South Carolina.

"Some time ago the State of South Carolina made a requisition to the Continental Congress for a supply of troops in South Carolina. The Congress sent young Mr. Laurens to recommend it to them to arm their domestics, and at the same time recommending Mr. Laurens as a proper person to head them. This is said to be the cause of Carolina's being willing to remain in a state of neutrality.'" — *Gaines' Mercury*, July 12.

The deliberations of the Governor and Council were required to be kept secret, but the excitement caused by the proposition broke the seal of silence. Christopher Gadsden and his brother-in-law, Thomas Ferguson, and John Edwards vehemently opposed the message. Moultrie says, "Edwards was so affected as to weep, saying, 'What! are we going to give up the town at last?'" and Gadsden, without scruple, communicated to some citizens, members of the legislature then under arms in the works, the nature of the measure which had been decided upon by the Governor and the other members of the Council. And solemnly and openly, it is said, was it then declared that the lives of the advocates of the measure should atone for the disgrace inflicted on the country.¹ This determination was made known to the members of the Council. But Rutledge and those who had resolved to make the proposition were just as firm and determined men as Gadsden himself, and did not shrink from the responsibility they had assumed, nor were they to be intimidated because Gadsden and his friends threatened their lives. How completely John Rutledge maintained his ascendancy, and retained the implicit confidence of the people, was amply demonstrated the next year when in the crisis of the war he was clothed with dictatorial powers—a delegation of power by which alone the authority of the State was preserved during two terrible years, when South Carolina was abandoned to her fate by those in whose interest she had gone into the struggle, and while Gadsden lay in the dungeon in St. Augustine.

There was difficulty, however, to get some one to carry the message. The Governor and Council adjourned to Colonel Beekman's tent on the lines at the gate of the town, and Moultrie requested Colonel John Laurens to carry this

¹ Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 271, 272.

message, which Laurens, knowing its purport, refused to do. Moultrie then sent for Colonel McIntosh, and requested that he would go with Colonel Roger Smith, who was to be sent out by the Governor. Both of these begged to be excused, and requested that Moultrie would get some other person. But Moultrie says, "*I, however, pressed them into a compliance.*" By his own statement, therefore, Moultrie was himself less opposed to this proposition than Roger Smith or Colonel McIntosh, for he "pressed them into compliance"; and whatever blame, if any, is attached to the Governor and Council for proposing this message, Moultrie must share, for he sent it. Why Roger Smith declined is not so clear, for he was present as a member of the Council, and was, it is supposed, one of the majority that passed the resolution to make the proposition.

There is another view of this matter which cannot escape observation. General Moultrie, it is claimed, refused to allow himself or his troops to be included in the surrender, but surely that position cannot be maintained. Moultrie had begun the negotiation by asking Prévost "on what terms he would be disposed to grant a capitulation." A capitulation of what but of Moultrie's army as well as of the town? His army consisted of about one thousand Continentals and two thousand militia. There can be no question that the militia would be included in the surrender by the Governor if made, and as certainly when Moultrie sends the proposition determined upon by the Governor and Council without reservation and by one of his own officers—and that a Continental officer—he was offering a capitulation of the whole army, which was necessarily and primarily included in Prévost's summons to the town.

Colonel McIntosh and Roger Smith were met by

Colonel Prévost, appointed by General Prévost, his brother, to confer with them. They held their conference a quarter of a mile from the gate, in the sight of the lines. Upon hearing the proposal Colonel Prévost answered "that they did not come in a legislative capacity, but if Colonel Smith pleased, he would show the proposal to the General." Upon their meeting a second time at twelve o'clock, Colonel Prévost said "that he had nothing to do with the Governor, that his business was with General Moultrie, and as the garrison was in arms they must surrender prisoners of war." Upon this, says Moultrie, the Governor and Council looked very grave and steadfastly on each other and on him, not knowing what he would say. After a little pause Moultrie said to the Governor and Council, "Gentlemen, you see how the matter stands; the point is this: I am to deliver you up prisoners of war or not." Some replied "Yes." Then said Moultrie: "I am determined not to deliver you up prisoners of war. *We will fight it out.*" Upon Moultrie saying this, Colonel Laurens, who was in the tent, jumped up and exclaimed, "Thank God, we are on our legs again;" and as Moultrie was coming out of the tent General Gadsden and Mr. Ferguson, two of the Council who were against giving up the town, followed him and said, "Act according to your judgment and we will support you." Moultrie thereupon immediately ordered the flag to be waved from the gate, which was a signal agreed upon should the conference be at an end. The enemy did not perceive the flag wave and continued theirs flying some time longer, upon which Moultrie sent out Mr. Kinloch to inform them that he "was very sorry they should be detained so long — that his flag had been waved some time ago, and that all conference was at an end." Moultrie then hurried on preparing for the defence.



The next morning, that is to say the 13th, at daylight, strange to say, to the great joy of the citizens, it was cried out along the lines, "The enemy is gone!" And so it proved to be true. The main body had commenced the retreat immediately after the conference was ended, leaving some of their light troops to make a show before the lines to prevent Moultrie from perceiving their movement, and then to move off under cover of the night. Pulaski immediately proceeded to reconnoitre and followed them with his cavalry, but they had crossed the Ashley River before he could overtake them.

Moultrie's letter to Lincoln of the 8th, informing him of his arrival in Charlestown and of the condition of affairs, reached Lincoln at four o'clock P.M. on the 10th. Where, it is not stated; but Lincoln's reply to Moultrie, written at that hour, was taken by the British on the 11th, near the lines of Charlestown. He was, therefore, on the afternoon of the 10th, within twenty-four hours' communication with Moultrie, and yet at five o'clock in the afternoon of the 12th, two days after, he was quietly encamped "about thirty-five miles from Wort's Ferry on Edisto."¹ This Wort's Ferry is that since known as Givan's Ferry, and is sixteen miles from Dorchester and about thirty miles from Charlestown. He had, therefore, made scarcely any progress in these two days, and was still, on the afternoon of the 12th, encamped sixty-five miles from Charlestown, though Moultrie had informed him, on the 8th, that Prévost was at Salkehatchie Bridge, that is, within fifty-six miles of the town.² He had now at last realized the seriousness of Prévost's invasion, for he writes: "We are now making and shall continue to make every exertion for the relief of Charlestown. The baggage will be left . . . the inability of the men only will put a period

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 435.

² *Ibid.*, 410.

to our daily marches," and yet he was making no haste. If he had made a full day's march on the 10th, why did he not, instead of sending a letter, which might fall into the hands of the enemy, as it did, resume the march on the morning of the 11th, and press on toward Wort's Ferry, thirty-five miles, and to Dorchester, sixteen miles further, which he might have reached on the evening of the 12th? He would then have been exactly the same distance from Ashley Ferry as was Prévost; for Ashley Ferry is equidistant from Dorchester as from Charlestown. When, therefore, Prévost would have learned of his approach, and turned to reach the Ferry,—his only way to cross the Ashley,—he would have been met by Lincoln across his path, and with Moultrie in his rear, between the two forces, Prévost must have been destroyed. Prévost had indeed placed himself in a cul-de-sac. Having no boats he had been obliged to cross the river at Ashley Ferry, twelve miles from Charlestown, and then to march down the peninsula which, as we have said, for six miles from the town was not a mile wide from the Ashley to the Cooper. Had Lincoln, therefore, sent no letter, but let his guns only announce to Prévost his coming after he had passed the quarter house, six miles from the town, he must surely have captured the British army — "Burgoyned" them as Moultrie, in his letter to Lincoln on the 5th, had hoped they would do. But instead of this, Lincoln writes in the evening of the 12th, "We are now encamped about thirty-five miles from Wort's Ferry on Edisto." Imagine Sumter or Marion or Tarleton or Stonewall Jackson going into camp under such circumstances!

Lincoln's letter of the 10th had been taken by the British on the 11th; but though it declared he was making every exertion for the relief of Charlestown, and that the



inability of his men only would put a period to his daily marches, the British, no doubt, were fully aware that at the rate of his progress they would have at least twenty-four more hours within which to storm the town or receive its capitulation. Doubtless, however, it was the letter that Prévost wished. But why, then, did he not accept the propositions of the Governor and Council, if that proposition was in the terms given by Moultrie and Ramsay? The answer of Colonel Prévost, that they did not come in a legislative capacity, and that the General would have nothing to do with the Governor and Council, was inconsistent with his proposition to General Williamson for a neutrality for a part of Georgia, the month before, which Governor Rutledge had then indignantly repudiated; and it was inconsistent, too, with his offer of the day before to General Moultrie, viz., "That such of the inhabitants who may not chuse to receive the generous offers of peace and protection may be received as prisoners of war, and their fate decided by the rest of the colonies." The proposition of the Governor and Council, if Moultrie and Ramsay are correct, was practically an acceptance of this offer enlarged to include the whole people of the State. Prévost, on the 11th, had proposed that such of the inhabitants of the town — not soldiers — such of the *inhabitants*, that is civilians, as would not accept his offer of peace might remain prisoners of war, that is, take no further part in the struggle until their fate was decided by the rest of the colonies. The Governor and Council had answered this proposition by another, offering the neutrality of the State until their fate should be decided by the result of the war between Great Britain and the other colonies.

There was under the circumstances nothing ignominious in the proposition of neutrality itself, for the people of

South Carolina had never proposed or desired separation from England, and the Revolution had taken a shape in the Declaration of Independence to which the mass of the people were doubtless opposed. The Congress of the State had not authorized her delegates to sign that instrument, and the delegates had announced when asked to do so that the people of South Carolina were not prepared for such a step. Then had come England's offer of peace through the commissioners in 1778, which fulfilled the utmost demand which the people of South Carolina had ever made. But the proffer of peace had been anticipated and defeated by the alliance with France, which was in itself hateful to the Carolinians, as shown by the fatal riot of the last September. Having accepted office under the new Constitution, and clothed with almost dictatorial power, Rutledge had in good faith endeavored to rally the people to resistance. But the militia in South Carolina had done as the militia had in Massachusetts, in Connecticut, in New Jersey, in Pennsylvania, and everywhere when called upon, they had refused to abandon their families at the call of a government whose authority was not yet established. General Bull's brigade from the lower part of the State had dwindled to but four hundred without a battle, and the Governor had been able to bring with him from all the rest of the State but six hundred men. No one probably knew better than Rutledge himself that of the seven hundred and eighty militia of Charlestown many were opposed to the whole movement, and many more to the Declaration of Independence and separation from Great Britain. Then, too, was the dread consideration of the evils and horrors of the storm of a town to which Colonel Prévoist had alluded in his answer to Moultrie's first offer and which, as the Governor and Council reviewed the ill-armed and undisciplined troops upon whom alone they



had to rely for resistance to a force they believed of twice their numbers, including the very flower of the British army, they could not but fear would be as successful as Colonel Prévost predicted. And to all of this was added the deep feeling and resentment to which Moultrie had alluded, when he declared that the other States would have no reason to complain, as they had abandoned South Carolina and left her to her own defence. It was no doubt, as we have before observed, wise in a military view for Washington to turn a deaf ear as he had so far done to all applications for aid. It was no doubt true that Charlestown was so far away, as Washington wrote to the President of Congress in the fall of the year, that by the time the Continental troops even in Virginia could reach it they would be so reduced by fatigue, sickness, and desertion that their aid would be of scarcely any consideration, and that the march would exhaust the whole detachment.¹ But if this was so, if the other colonies, to the assistance of which South Carolina had so liberally contributed of her means, could not come to her aid, though the enemy weakened his forces in their front to assail her, surely she was not to be blamed for taking care of herself. Recollecting the position which her people had taken throughout their struggle, there was nothing in duty or honor to prevent the Governor and Council, if they possessed such a power, from declaring a neutrality between Great Britain and these colonies which desired a separation and independence which South Carolina did not. But when if true the Governor and Council proposed that the question whether the State should belong to Great Britain or remain one of the United States should be determined, not by herself, but by the treaty of peace between those two powers, leaving the fate of the State to

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 411.

be determined by others than her own people, they inflicted a stain upon her history which required all the blood shed in the subsequent struggle to wash away. Whether South Carolina under the circumstances was called upon to continue a struggle upon which she had not voluntarily embarked, was a fair question for his Excellency and Council. But they abandoned her honor with their own when they proposed, if they did so, to allow that question to be decided by any but her own people. We prefer to believe that the Laurens account of the transaction is the true one.



CHAPTER XVIII

1779

LINCOLN reached Dorchester on the 14th of May, the day after Prévost had made good his escape by way of Ashley Ferry. Having crossed the river, Prévost remained for some days near the Ferry, then retired toward the seacoast and took possession of John's Island, which is separated from the mainland by Stono River. This river or inlet is connected with Ashley by a waterway known as Wappoo Cut, which opens directly opposite the town. The British kept a post on the mainland, covering a ferry across the Stono as well for the security of the island as for the protection of foraging parties. Three redoubts were thrown up for the defence of this post, which were joined by lines of communication, and its rear was covered by the Stono. Across this inlet there was a bridge of sloops and schooners lashed together. The post was thought of so much consequence that for some time the garrison consisted of fifteen hundred men under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Prévost. Lincoln determined to attack this post, and on the 31st of May General Isaac Huger was detached with one thousand foot and Count Pulaski's and Mory's horse for the purpose. But Pulaski, on reconnoitring the position, reported the British as too strongly intrenched, and a retreat was ordered.

There existed at this time great disaffection to General Lincoln, and the abandonment of this attack, though it was upon Pulaski's report, added to the dissatisfaction

with his command. Complaints and reflections against him were very general. His conduct in marching to Augusta, and leaving the Low Country exposed and putting Charlestown in such eminent danger, was much criticised, not only by the citizens, but by officers under his command.¹ Lincoln was aware of his unpopularity and was anxious to be relieved, and the more so as he was suffering in health. On the 13th of May Congress had given him permission to retire and had "resolved that Brig. Gen. Moultrie be commander in the absence of Maj. Gen. Lincoln of the Southern army during its continuance, to the southward of North Carolina, with the allowance of a Major General on a separate command until the further order of Congress," and John Jay, President, had communicated this resolution to Moultrie in very flattering terms. But Moultrie loyally and modestly replied, trusting that the present posture of affairs would prevent Lincoln from availing himself of the permission granted him by Congress, and in the same spirit wrote to Lincoln urging him not to leave. Lincoln replied to Moultrie on the 10th of June with equal patriotism but evident mortification. He declared that the same motives which had led him to the State would retain him so long as his health would permit him to act, if there was the same prospect of rendering service to his country as when he took command in the department; but as it appeared from the unkind declarations thrown out in the capital that he had lost the confidence of the people, whether justly or not, he could render little service to the public and ought to retire. He went on to add that from the attachment of the people to Moultrie, and their confidence in his knowledge, judgment, and experience in military matters, he had great confidence that Moultrie would

¹ See Colonel Grimké's letter, Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 495.



command with honor to himself and with the approbation of his country. Lincoln did not, however, relinquish the command, but continued, without achieving any successes, until he capitulated at Charlestown the year after. Nor is it to be believed that Moultrie would have been more successful had Lincoln turned over the command to him. The truth is, that neither was a great commander. Both were doubtless brave men, but neither was equal to the emergency. Lincoln was brave, active, and vigilant, but he was so very cautious that he would take no step of any consequence without first calling a council of officers to advise with them upon measures—and such councils seldom march or fight to any purpose. Under the advice of such a council he had gone to Augusta, and when the emergency arose demanding a prompt and vigorous retracing of his steps, he hesitated until he let slip an opportunity of destroying the enemy, came near losing the town he was especially charged to defend, and lost the confidence of the people. Moultrie, too, was brave—brave to a fault. But he was inactive and careless. Through his neglect and indifference the victory which has immortalized his name came well-nigh being lost, and the same want of energy was now in a few days to lose the fruits of another battle. The military genius of the people had not yet developed itself, nor, indeed, was the spirit which was to inflame that genius yet itself aroused.

On the 15th of June General Lincoln came to town from his camp at Stono to consult with the Governor and Council upon a plan of operations against the British lines. The attack was to be made by his troops, and a strong detachment from Charlestown was to be thrown over to James Island to coöperate with him. This plan was, no doubt, suggested by information of the intended movements of the enemy. On the 16th of June Lieu-



tenant Colonel Prévost left for Savannah, carrying with him the grenadiers of the Sixtieth Regiment and all the vessels which had formed the bridge of communication except an armed flat which contained twenty men. Indeed, it seems to have been determined to evacuate the post, and upon Lieutenant Colonel Maitland, who had succeeded to the command, devolved the duty of carrying out this purpose, now rendered both difficult and dangerous by Colonel Prévost's injudicious conduct in carrying away the vessels that preserved the communication with John's Island. The 17th, 18th, and 19th days of June were employed by the British in transporting across the inlet the sick and wounded, the negroes and Indians, with the baggage and horses belonging to the garrison, and in destroying all unnecessary huts and buildings. These precautionary measures had become the more necessary because of the reduced condition of the garrison, which now consisted of the first battalion of the Seventy-first Regiment, part of a Hessian regiment, part of the North and South Carolina regiments of provincials, and a detachment of artillery, probably not much exceeding five hundred men effective and fit for duty.¹

Lincoln had learned of the weak condition of the British post, but his own force was scarcely better. The South Carolina militia, under General Williamson, were disappearing one by one at first; then a whole company from Colonel Kershaw's regiment — a captain, subaltern, and twenty-seven privates — deserted their post all together. Nor could those who remained be depended upon. The James Island company could not be induced to mount guard, but would content themselves with riding patrols in the day opposite John's Island, nay, some of them at night would go over to the British camp in small canoes.

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 116.



It was found necessary to remove the company to Charlestown and put others in their place.¹ The time of the North Carolina militia would expire in a few days. Nevertheless, Lincoln determined to attack the British before they withdrew. On the 16th, the day upon which Prévost had left the post, Lincoln instructed Moultrie to hold the garrison of the town in readiness to march on the shortest notice, and to provide one hundred rounds of ammunition to each man. The Governor and Council agreed to allow twelve hundred men to go from the town, and the Governor wrote offering to do anything to assist the movement. On the 19th General Lincoln ordered Moultrie to throw over on James Island at once all the troops which could be spared from the town, and to show them to the enemy on John's Island. Moultrie was to take his boats up Wappoo Cut to enable him to cross to John's Island if opportunity offered. If he heard any firing in the morning at Stono Ferry, and found the enemy retreating, he was at once to pursue them. Moultrie thus had three days, with the proffered assistance of the Governor and Council, to provide boats and transportation to take him across from the town to James Island, a distance of about a mile. Had he obeyed Lincoln's orders, and had had everything in readiness, he would have crossed his command of seven hundred men over during the day of the 19th, and would have been in position to coöperate with Lincoln the next morning. But, unfortunately, he had neglected Lincoln's instructions, as he had neglected Lee's, to protect the flank of his fort three years before. A fortunate accident prevented the catastrophe which might have resulted from his neglect of Lee's order ; but none occurred to save him from the consequence of his neglect of Lincoln's. When called upon to move, the

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 474, 490.



boats were not in readiness, and so the next morning before he had got halfway across with the detachment from the town to James Island, he heard Lincoln's guns commencing the attack on the British lines at Stono Ferry, and the battle was entirely over before he arrived at Wappoo Cut.¹

Lincoln put his army in motion at midnight of the 19th, and having joined the battalion of light infantry, under Lieutenant Colonel Henderson, who had been advanced, they arrived about an hour after daybreak before the enemy's works. Lincoln's flanks were covered by two battalions of light infantry, — Lieutenant Colonel Henderson at the head of one corps, and Colonel Malmedy at the head of the other. The left of the line was composed of Continental troops, under General Huger, with four field-pieces. The brigade of North and South Carolina militia with two field-pieces formed the right, under General Jethro Sumner of North Carolina. In the rear of this body was posted a small party of Virginia militia under General Mason, who had recently arrived. With these were two field-pieces in reserve. The cavalry under Pulaski were posted upon the right of his reserve and rather more retired.

With this cavalry under Pulaski was a small body of North Carolina horsemen, under the command of William Richardson Davie, who was later to become one of the most active and famous partisan officers of the war.

Colonel Lee in his *Memoirs* commends the formation of Lincoln's line of battle, in that, knowing that the Highlanders, the Seventy-first Regiment, would take the enemy's right, he had placed his Continentals on his left, though according to military usage they were entitled to position on the right, as they were the regular troops. The British

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 490.



line under Lieutenant Colonel Maitland, an able officer, was composed of the Highlanders on the right and a regiment of Hessians on the left, with the provincial regiment of North and South Carolina in the centre, under Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton. About seven o'clock in the morning the attack was begun upon the British pickets, which gave the first alarm to Colonel Maitland. The garrison was immediately under arms, and two companies of the Seventy-first Regiment were sent out to feel the strength of the assailants. The detachment had gone a little more than a quarter of a mile when it fell in with the Continentals on Lincoln's left. An engagement immediately ensued and was so obstinately maintained by the Highlanders that they did not retreat until all their officers were either killed or wounded; and of the two companies only eleven men were able to make good their retreat. This advantage encouraged the assailants, who were ordered to reserve their fire and to put the issue of the battle on the bayonet. Lincoln's whole line advanced with alacrity. The enemy waiting their approach until within sixty yards of the abatis, they were received with a full fire from the artillery and infantry. Disobeying Lincoln's orders his troops returned the fire, and the action became general. The Hessians on the British left gave way in the face of the North and South Carolina militia under Sumner. Maitland, seeing this, made a quick movement with the Seventy-first Regiment from the right to the left of the British line, and stopped Sumner's progress. By the great exertions of Colonel Maitland the Hessians were rallied and again brought into action, and the battle raged with increased fury. Lincoln endeavored to stop the fire, and, finally succeeding, ordered a charge; but the moment had passed, and the troops could not be got to the work. They renewed the fire, which continued for more than an

hour, when the British army was seen hastening to the ferry, Moultrie having failed in making the intended diversion. Lincoln now despairing of accomplishing his object, — the destruction of this body, — ordered a retreat, and some confusion ensuing incident thereto, Maitland promptly turned upon him and advanced with his whole line. The cavalry now ordered up (Pulaski was not present) gallantly charged upon the enemy themselves in disorder; but Maitland closed his ranks as the horse bore upon him, and giving them a full fire from his rear rank, the front, holding its ground with the bayonet, brought this corps, brave but undisciplined, to a halt, and then forced it to retire. Mason now advanced with his Virginia brigade and delivering a heavy fire the enemy drew back, and Lincoln effected a retreat in tolerably good order.¹

Thus ended the battle of Stono. Whatever may have been the result had Lincoln's orders to put the issue of the battle upon the bayonet been carried out, and had not his troops in disobedience of his express command stopped to deliver their fire instead of charging the enemy at once, upon Moultrie must rest the blame of its failure. He had been warned to have boats ready to cross three days in advance. The boats were there; for he found the next morning enough of them to move seven hundred men, besides a number of gentlemen volunteers. It was not, therefore, the want of boats, but the delay in collecting them, that prevented his crossing on the evening of the 19th. These seven hundred fresh troops, equal in numbers to the whole of the British force, coming up upon their rear during the action, would have secured the capture or destruction of the whole party. But this great advantage was lost simply

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776*, 130, 131; Steadman's *Hist. Am. War*, vol. II, 116, 118; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 495, 498.

through Moultrie's want of energy and promptness. Our hero could be trusted for whatever gallantry could accomplish, but unfortunately he could not be relied upon for exertion.

The action on the Stono had lasted very nearly an hour. The British loss was 129. Of these 3 officers and 23 men were killed, and 10 officers and 93 men wounded and missing.¹ The American loss was somewhat more — about 150 killed and wounded. Among the killed was Colonel Owen Roberts, the commander of the Fourth Continental Regiment of South Carolina (artillery). Colonel Roberts had taken an active part in the Revolution from its commencement, and had been elected Major of the First Regiment by the Provincial Congress upon the organization of the troops which the State afterwards transferred to the Continental service. From that position he had been promoted Lieutenant Colonel of the Fourth (or artillery) Regiment. He had taken part in Howe's expedition to Florida, and had commanded the artillery in Howe's unsuccessful battle at Savannah the December before; indeed, it was through his extraordinary exertions that the British were kept in check on that occasion until the centre of Howe's army had made its escape. His son, who was also in the action, hearing of his father's misfortune, hastened to him. The expiring officer perceiving his son's great sorrow, with great composure, it is said, thus addressed him: "I rejoice, my boy, once more to embrace you. Receive this sword, which has never been tarnished by dishonor, and let it not be inactive while the liberty of your country is endangered. Take my last adieu, accept my blessing, and return to your duty."² Major Ancrum, a volunteer, and William R. Davie, now promoted by Lincoln to Brigade Major of Cavalry, were both severely wounded. The

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 118.

² Garden's *Anecdotes*.

latter narrowly escaped with his life, and was only saved by the great gallantry of a trooper. The horse of this trooper had been killed, and on his retreat, seeing the eminent danger of his officer, returned at the risk of his life, for the enemy was within a few steps, and with great composure raised Major Davie on his horse, to whose bridle Davie still clung, and safely led him from the battle-field.¹ Depositing the Major in safety, this soldier disappeared, nor could Davie upon his recovery, months after, ascertain who was his preserver, though he made the most diligent inquiry. Two years after, at the siege of Ninety-Six, the soldier made himself known to Colonel Davie,—as Davie then was,—and was killed the next day in battle. Among the slightly wounded at Stono were General Isaac Huger, commanding the Continentals, and Colonel Laumoy, the French engineer. Hugh Jackson, a brother of Andrew Jackson the President, who fought in the ranks in Davie's corps, died after the action of heat and fatigue.²

Two days after the battle Moultrie sent three galleys through Wappoo Cut to break up the enemy's communications on the Stono. The three galleys got under way that evening, and coming up with them at Stanyarne's were received with a brisk fire from field-pieces and small arms, which lasted for three-quarters of an hour. The galleys took a schooner from under the guns of the British, which they silenced. They then proceeded farther up the river and attacked another battery of three field-pieces on a bluff, and these they also silenced; but daylight coming on, and the tide having been spent, they came to anchor, and some time after returned, bringing with them their prize schooner. In this affair six men were killed and a number wounded on the galleys.

¹ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 186.

² Parton's *Life of Jackson*, 69.

The British post at Stono was soon after evacuated, and the army retiring along the seacoast passed from island to island until it reached Beaufort. At this place General Prévost established a post, the garrison of which was left under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Maitland. Prévost himself, with the rest of the army, returned to Georgia to rest his troops during the sultry and sickly season in the Low Country, which had now set in.

The only advantages which had been gained by this inroad of the British were first the establishment of the post at Beaufort, which was of strategic importance, as from it they could readily penetrate by means of the inland navigation into any part of the Low Country unmolested by the Carolinians, for the want of a navy; and, secondly, the plunder which they carried off. This last, however, was a much greater advantage to the individuals in the British army themselves than to the King, for it alienated many a loyal subject from his Majesty's cause, and cumbered the army itself with much unnecessary luggage.

Says the historian Ramsay, the incursion into South Carolina and subsequent retreat contributed very little to the advancement of the Royal cause; but it added much to the wealth of the officers, soldiers, and followers of the British army, and still more to the distresses of the inhabitants. The forces under the command of General Prévost marched through the richest settlements of the State, where there are the fewest white inhabitants in proportion to the number of slaves. The hapless Africans, allured with hopes of freedom, forsook their owners and repaired in great numbers to the Royal army. They endeavored to recommend themselves to their new masters by discovering where their owners had concealed their property, and assisted in carrying it off. All subordina-

tion destroyed, they became insolent and rapacious, and, in some instances, exceeded the British in their plunderings and devastations. Collected in great crowds near the Royal army, they were seized with camp fever, and great numbers perished. The British carried out of the State, it is supposed, about three thousand slaves, many of whom were shipped from Georgia and East Florida and sold in the West Indies; the planters lost upwards of four thousand, each of whom was worth two hundred and fifty Spanish dollars. When the British retreated, they had accumulated so much plunder that they had not the means of removing the whole of it. The vicinity of the American army made them avoid the mainland and pass in great precipitation from one island to another. Many of the horses which they had taken from the planters were lost in ineffectual attempts to transport them over the rivers and marshes. For want of transportation a number of the negroes were left behind. These had been so thoroughly impressed by the British with the expectation of the severest treatment, and even of certain death from their owners in case of their returning home, that in order to get off with the retreating army they would sometimes cling to the sides of the boats. To prevent this danger to the boats, the hands of some of them were chopped off, and soldiers were posted with cutlasses and bayonets to oblige them to keep at proper distances. Many, laboring under diseases, afraid to return home, forsaken by their new masters, and destitute of the necessaries of life, perished in the woods. Those who got off with the army were collected on Otter Island, where the camp fever continued to rage, and hundreds of them expired. Their dead bodies, as they lay exposed in the woods, were devoured by beasts and birds, and to the day when Ramsay wrote, 1785, the island was strewn with their bones. The



British also carried off with them rice barrels filled with plate and household furniture in large quantities, which they had taken from the inhabitants. They had spread over a considerable extent of country, and small parties visited almost every house, stripping it of whatever was most valuable, and rifling the inhabitants of their money, rings, jewels, and other personal ornaments. The repositories of the dead were in several places broken open and the grave itself searched for hidden treasure. What was destroyed by the soldiers was supposed to be of more value than what they carried off. Feather-beds were ripped open for the sake of ticking. Windows and chinaware were dashed to pieces. Not only the larger domestic animals were cruelly and wantonly shot down, but the licentiousness of the soldiery extended so far that in several places nothing within their reach, however small and insignificant, was suffered to live. For this destruction they could not make the plea of necessity, for what was thus killed was frequently not used nor carried away. The gardens, which had been improved with great care and ornamented with many foreign productions, were laid waste, and nicest curiosities destroyed. The houses of planters were seldom burnt, but in every other way the destructions and depredations committed by the British were so enormous that should the whole be particularly related, concludes Ramsay, they who live at a distance would scarcely believe what could be attested by hundreds of eye-witnesses.¹ Hundreds of eye-witnesses are living to-day who could attest alike to similar atrocities and robbery committed near eighty years afterwards in the same country by men calling themselves fellow-countrymen of the plundered, and under the same pretext of spoiling and punishing rebels. But the British historian

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 30-34.

of the war of the Revolution who wrote after Ramsay offers no excuse in palliation of such conduct. He says the only real advantage gained by this irruption into South Carolina was a supply of provisions for the troops, the want of which had begun to be felt in Georgia, and the establishing a post at Beaufort. But the American accounts, he adds, have charged the army under General Prévost with gaining other advantages of not so honorable a kind, and with such an appearance of truth that a regard for impartiality obliges us not to pass them over unnoticed. By these accounts they have been charged with plundering the inhabitants indiscriminately and enriching themselves at their expense — an imputation, if true, of a most disgraceful nature and ruinous tendency not only to the army, but to the interest of the British nation, as such rapacious conduct must have irritated the inhabitants in general against the British army and alienated the attachment even of those who were best affected to government.¹

The attack upon Stono was scarcely over, and the retreat of the British to Port Royal was not yet completed, when the militia under Lincoln began to demand their release and to be allowed to return home. On July 3 General Moultrie writes to Governor Rutledge that from Williamson's information he finds it impossible to keep his men in the field any longer, and that the expectation of relief for them was entirely vanished, as he had seen a letter from Colonel Lisle and others in that part of the country, to Williamson, informing him he could not get the men to march to the coast. As an excuse, he writes, they have played the old stale game of Cameron's being in the Cherokees with a number of white men and Indians ready to fall on their part of the country, and also the story of

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 119, 120.



one thousand Tories coming from North Carolina. He could not tell what to advise unless they could discharge all the back country men and begin some new plan. He had prevailed upon Williamson's men to stay until he could hear from the Governor, when he had no doubt that they would be allowed to return home. Two days after he writes to Lincoln that upon General Williamson's frequent representation that he could not keep his men a day longer in camp, he had issued an order for their returning home that day, the 8th of July. He adds, "I know they would go without my leave, had I not done it (their number 726)." Colonel Pickens's men went off in a body, and the term of the North Carolina and Virginia militia having expired, they also took their departure.¹ Fortunately, the heat of the weather prevented any further operations for the season, so Lincoln established himself at Sheldon with about eight hundred Continentals, conveniently situated to watch the enemy at Beaufort.

During Prévost's invasion an incident occurred which nearly cost the State the life of a citizen who afterwards rose to great distinction in her service. Two companies, one commanded by Captain John Raven Mathews, and the other by Captain John Barnwell, were stationed at the plantation of Mathews on the John's Island's side of the Stono. Captain Mathews, by seniority, commanded Captain Barnwell's Beaufort company as well as his own, and unfortunately by drilling in sight of the British post allowed the British to ascertain the strength of his command; nor was he sufficiently careful in posting his guards and in permitting visitors to his camp. Thomas Fenwick, who was after this a well-known Royalist, coming in, supped with his officers, and thus obtained full information in regard to the post. At midnight a body

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 11.

of British troops crossed to John's Island in two parties, one of which went directly to Fenwick's house, about three miles above, and the other to Mathews's landing. Upon a signal from Fenwick himself both parties proceeded simultaneously to the attack, Fenwick himself conducting his party against his friends and neighbors, of whose hospitality he had just partaken. The first sentinel approached, whether from fright or treachery, ran off without firing; the second, James Black, a ship carpenter of Beaufort, fired upon the advancing enemy and was immediately bayoneted, and died of his wounds. Captain Mathews's quarters were surrounded, and every man of his company made prisoners. Captain Barnwell, when also called upon to surrender, inquired what quarter they should have. "No quarter to rebels," was the reply. Then said Captain Barnwell, "Defend yourselves." Then a British sergeant called out, "Surrender, and you shall have honorable quarter." Barnwell demanded by what authority he offered quarter. "I am but a sergeant in command," was the answer, "but my word is as good as any officer's in his Majesty's service." On this Captain Barnwell and his men surrendered their arms, whereupon they were immediately set upon and bayoneted, most of the company falling killed or wounded. Robert Barnwell and a Mr. Barnes each received seventeen bayonet wounds. Mr. Barnwell was left apparently dead, but by the unremitting kindness and attentions of Mrs. Robert Gibbes, who lived on the adjoining plantation, he finally recovered, and lived to occupy distinguished positions in the State for which at this time he came so near losing his life. With his two elder brothers, John and Edward, after the fall of Charlestown, he was confined in a British prison ship.¹

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 182, 185.



While General Prévost lay near the town several armed vessels brought him supplies from Savannah. To intercept this communication Captain William Hall, in the brig *Notre Dame*, Captain Tryon, in the brig *Beaufort*, Captain Anthony, in the brig *Bellona*, and some other private armed vessels put to sea under the direction of the navy board. They fell in with seven British vessels near Stono, two of which were taken and brought safe into Charlestown; one was blown up, the rest escaped.

About the same time sixty grenadiers of the British army, with two field-pieces and musketry, attacked the American schooner *Rattlesnake* from the banks of the Stono. Her gallant commander, Frisbie, repulsed the assailants with the loss of their captain and the greater part of his men; but finding it impossible to escape with his vessel, set her on fire and conducted his wounded men with the rest of his crew safely through the country, though in possession of the enemy, to the American camp at Bacon's bridge.¹

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 71, 72.



CHAPTER XIX

1779

COUNT D'ESTAING, as we have seen, upon abandoning the expedition against Rhode Island, had put into Boston. Having refitted his ships there on the 3d of November, 1778, he sailed for the West Indies. There he had been more successful, having wrested from the British the islands of St. Vincent, in June, and Grenada, in July, 1779. After remaining some time at Grenada for the purpose of settling the government, he had sailed with his fleet for Cape François in Hispaniola.

The post at Beaufort, established by Prévost, was secure against attack so long as the British maintained their superiority by sea, and so long as that post was maintained General Lincoln could not even occupy his former quarters at Purrysburg without danger of being enclosed between the British troops at Savannah and those at Beaufort. On the other hand, if the British lost their superiority by sea, the division of their force into two parts would render each of them more vulnerable. Moved by such considerations Governor Rutledge, General Lincoln, and Monsieur Plombard, the French consul at Charlestown, severally wrote letters to the Count D'Estaing, who by this time had arrived at Cape François, in which they represented to him the state of affairs in the Southern States, and pointed out to him the advantage which might be expected should he during the hurricane months in the West Indies visit the American coast



with his fleet and coöperate with General Lincoln in the recovery of Georgia.

D'Estaing, having discretionary orders from his court for such coöperation, flushed with his success at Granada, indulged the ambitious but vain hope of being able not only to sweep the American coast with his superior fleet, but by acting in conjunction with the Americans to reduce the different posts occupied by the British troops within the limits of the revolted provinces, and thereby put an end to the war, even during the present campaign. He accordingly sailed forthwith and dispatched to Charlestown two ships of the line as soon as he got through the Windward Passage to announce his approach, and with the rest of his fleet, consisting of twenty ships of the line, two ships of fifty guns, and eleven frigates having on board a considerable force, arrived on the coast of Georgia about the beginning of September. So sudden and unexpected was his appearance that the British ship *Experiment* of fifty guns and two store ships under convoy fell in with the French fleet off the bar of Savannah, and were of course taken. The *Ariel*, of twenty-four guns, which had been on a cruise off Charlestown bar, shared the same fate.¹

In the meanwhile the General Assembly met again in July, and Lincoln readily gave leave of absence to Moultrie, who was a senator for the parishes of St. Philip and St. Michael, and to all officers of the army who were members of it, to attend. Indeed, he desired all of them to do so in the hope that upon the floor of the Assembly they might represent the difficulties of keeping up the army and the folly of depending upon the militia; that it was impossible to keep the latter in the field; and that unless some other method could be devised to raise an army, the

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 121, 123.

country must be given up.¹ But notwithstanding the presence of Moultrie and his officers, all that was done for the defence of the State was the passage of an act to recruit the regular regiments already organized, offering increased bounties, and to make new militia regulations. The most that could have been accomplished by this act — had the inducements been sufficient to effect its purpose — was the filling up the six Continental regiments and Colonel Horry's Regiment of Dragoons, which would have given but five thousand men. The act then went on to divide the whole militia of the State into three classes, one of which should be required to hold themselves in readiness to march to such place as they should be ordered, to do duty for two months from the time of their joining headquarters or arriving at the place of their destination, at the expiration of which it was provided that they should be promptly relieved by another class, who should also do duty for two months, at the expiration of which they should in turn be relieved by the third class, and so on in rotation. The commanding officer, it was provided, might detain any such class ten days over and above these two months, and *no longer in any case whatsoever!*² Such were the inadequate provisions made for a war of independence by a State struggling for its existence. Five thousand men were to be hired, if possible, by high bounties, to fight for liberty; but in no case whatsoever were the militia to be kept in the field longer than two months and ten days. No matter that a siege was in progress or a battle imminent at the expiration of seventy days, they were to be discharged. So far from adding to the efficiency of the militia this act really reduced the time during which the militia could be kept in

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 29.

² *Statutes at Large of So. Ca.*, vol. IV, 502.

the field. For by the act of the 13th of February before, the Governor was given authority when a sister State was invaded to order a draft of one-third of the militia of the State, who were to remain so long as the service might require, not exceeding *three* months at any one time, unless a relief had been ordered and on their march, in which case they were required to remain till such relief arrived.¹ The term of the service of the militia was thus reduced, not extended, and their efficiency that much lessened.

After the battle of Stono, Lincoln established his little army at Sheldon, some fifteen or twenty miles from Beaufort. Nothing of interest transpired while he, with the Governor, was waiting to hear from D'Estaing except some very successful scouting by Sergeant Jasper. Jasper was as intelligent and enterprising as he was brave. He possessed not only the dashing gallantry which he exhibited when he leapt from the bastion of Fort Moultrie to take up the flag and replace it on the parapet amidst the storm of shot and shell from the British fleet on the 28th of June, 1776, but the cool, calm courage, the first requisite of a scout. Moultrie had great confidence in him, and when in the field gave him occasionally a roving commission, allowing him to take out with him six men of his own selection, at a time. He often went out in this way, and sometimes returned with prisoners before his absence was observed. At one time he went into the British lines at Savannah and delivered himself up as a deserter, complaining of the ill usage he received in the American camp. The British, who had heard of his heroic conduct and character, strange to say readily accepted his story and gladly received and caressed him. Jasper seems to have enjoyed their hospitality, for he remained with them eight days, and then, having thoroughly informed him-

¹ *Statutes at Large of So. Ca.*, vol. IV, 466.

self of their situation, strength, and intentions, quietly returned to his friends with the information he had obtained.¹

About the first of September an officer came up to the town from Count D'Estaing's fleet, then off Charleston bar, to inform General Lincoln that the Count was ready to coöperate with him in the reduction of Savannah, and at the same time to urge the necessity of dispatch, as he could not remain long on the coast at that season of the year. The news caused great excitement, and the legislature, which was still in session, issuing paper money, raising taxes, regulating auctions, and laying embargoes, adjourned, that the military members might return to their commands. The Governor and Council and the military men joined heartily in expediting everything that was necessary; and boats were sent to the French fleet to assist in taking the guns and stores on shore. Every one, says Moultrie, was cheerful and sure of success; no one doubted that there was anything more to do than to march up to Savannah and demand a surrender. The militia was drafted, and volunteers joined readily, to be present at the expected surrender, and in hopes of seeing the British march out and deliver up their arms. But alas! adds Moultrie, it turned out a bloody affair, and we were repulsed from the British lines with a loss of eight or nine hundred men killed and wounded; and he continues: "I think I may say that the militia volunteers were much disappointed, as I suppose they did not go with the expectation of storming lines. I was pleased when I was informed that in general they behaved well; and they could truly say they had been in a severe fire."

The British commanders in Georgia were not apprised of the arrival of Count D'Estaing until the 4th of Sep-

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 24.

tember, when his whole force, consisting of forty-one sail, was seen to the southward of Tybee plying to windward. Information was immediately sent to General Prévost, and measures were at once taken for increasing the fortifications at Savannah and putting the town in a proper condition of defence. The garrison at Sunbury, under Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, was withdrawn and orders were dispatched to Beaufort for Lieutenant Colonel Maitland, with the troops, and Captain Christian of the navy, with the ships and galleys under his command, to repair in all haste to Savannah.¹

On the 5th General Lincoln ordered all officers and soldiers to join their regiments, and on the 8th the Continentals were drawn from the forts and their places taken by the militia. The scarcity of arms and ammunition made it necessary to furnish them to the militia from the arsenals of South Carolina, and a detachment of the Georgia Continental troops commanded by General Lachlan McIntosh was ordered to take charge of them and march to Augusta. There Pulaski was ordered to join McIntosh, who with the infantry and cavalry was then directed to march toward Savannah in advance of the army under General Lincoln to open communication with the French. Lincoln proceeded to take command of the army at Sheldon on the 12th, leaving Moultrie in command at Charlestown.²

On the 9th of September the French fleet came to anchor off Savannah bar, but as their large ships could not come near the shore, a landing could only be effected by small boats, which were sent from Charlestown for the purpose. This occasioned delay, so that it was not until the 12th that D'Estaing's troops were got ashore at

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 123.

² McCall's *History of Georgia*, vol. ii, 243, 247.

Beaulieu in Ossabaw Sound, an inlet of the sea some miles south of the Savannah River. As soon as the debarkation of the French troops — about three thousand in number — was completed, Count D'Estaing moved against Savannah, without waiting for the junction of the forces under Lincoln, and, on the 16th, in a most offensive manner, demanded the surrender of Prévost in the name of his most Christian Majesty the King of France, without any reference to his allies, the Americans. In his summons he vaunted in terms of extravagance the magnitude of his force, the valor of his troops, who had so lately stormed the fortifications of Granada and achieved the conquest of that island, and threatened to make General Prévost answerable in his own person should he persist in making a fruitless defence. This conduct of D'Estaing aroused at once the same jealousy on the part of the South Carolinians as Lafayette's scheme, in 1778, for an attack upon Canada, through the joint operations of the United States and France, had excited in the minds of Washington and of Henry Laurens, then President of Congress.¹ What if, having thus possessed himself of Savannah, D'Estaing should hold it for the French King, in whose name he demanded its surrender? Upon a remonstrance, however, it is said, having been made by General Lincoln, the Count gave an explanation which was accepted at least as satisfactory;² but there was still suspicion on the part of the Carolinians and arrogance on the part of the French.

General Prévost, to whom it was of the utmost importance to gain time, returned a civil message to Count D'Estaing, acknowledging the receipt of the summons and desiring twenty-four hours to consider an answer and to prepare the terms on which a surrender might be made,

¹ *Writings of Washington*, vol. VI, 106; *Hildreth*, vol. III, 270.

² *Steadman's Am. War*, vol. II, 125; *Memoirs of the War of 1776*, 137.

should that be his ultimate determination. D'Estaing, without doubting but that the terror of his name had caused the British hearts to tremble, and expecting nothing less than a surrender of the town at the expiration of the time, granted the request without any difficulty.¹ But Prévost had no idea of surrendering; he was negotiating for time to allow Lieutenant Colonel Maitland to join him with the garrison from Beaufort — and in this hope he was not disappointed.

Lieutenant Colonel Maitland, who had commanded the British at the battle of Stono, a very able and enterprising officer, responded at once to the summons of Prévost to join him; and after struggling with difficulties, during some parts of the route, which to one less determined would have appeared insurmountable, arrived at Savannah before the expiration of the time with the best part of his detachment, amounting to eight hundred veteran troops. As the French were in possession of the lower part of the river, to effect a junction Maitland was obliged to take his troops in boats through the marshes by an inland watercourse called Watts' Cut, which for two miles was so shoal that the men, wading up to their waists, had to drag the boats by main force through the mud. Maitland himself during this expedition was fatally ill with a bilious fever; but this undaunted and accomplished officer, ill unto death as he was, braving all difficulties, made good his way to the Savannah River, where, taking his boats above the anchorage ground of the French fleet,

¹ The friends of Sir James Wright, the loyal Governor of Georgia, claim that it was by his determined zeal and spirit the defence of his capital was made "one of the most brilliant events of the war in the South." This defence, it is also affirmed, would not have been made but for his vote in the council of war, which decided upon it. *The Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 727.

he entered the town in time to allow Prévost to send a message of defiance instead of a proposal to surrender. The rest of the Beaufort garrison, which for want of boats could not be transported, remained with the ships and galleys under the command of Captain Christian of the Royal navy, and their retreat being cut off, they took a new position in Callibogie Sound, where, by erecting batteries on the shore, they made such a strong disposition for defence that neither the French nor Americans attempted to molest them during the subsequent siege of Savannah.

The safe arrival of so considerable a reinforcement, and that, too, of chosen troops, but above all, says Steadman, the presence of this officer who commanded them, sick as he was, but in whose zeal, ability, and military experience so much confidence was deservedly placed by the army, inspired the garrison of Savannah with new animation. An answer was returned to Count D'Estaing that the town would be defended to the last extremity. Thus was D'Estaing's opportunity lost. Had he attacked the garrison at once when he appeared before Savannah, Prévost must have been taken with his army.

Governor Rutledge made great exertions to get out the militia, and succeeded so far that with those of Georgia and the South Carolina Continental regiments, Lincoln's force amounted to 4000; with these Lincoln lay at McMillen's, three miles from Savannah, from the 17th to the 23d of September, when he joined the French and encamped before the town. The allied army thus numbered about 7000 men. The British garrison was about 2500.¹

From the 23d of September the allied army was employed

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 41; *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 137; Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 127.



in making fascines and building batteries. The ordnance intended for the siege was brought up, and in twelve days fifty-three pieces of battering guns and fourteen mortars were mounted. On the other hand, the zeal and ardor of the British garrison, under the inspiration of Maitland's arrival, was increased, and new defences were daily constructed under the judicious eye and masterly direction of an able engineer, Captain Moncrieff. When the French first landed, not more than ten or twelve pieces of artillery appeared upon the fortifications of Savannah; but so incessantly did the garrison labor in strengthening and enlarging the old works, and in erecting new redoubts and batteries, that before the conclusion of the siege nearly one hundred guns were in position. While thus himself engaged Prévost, who thoroughly understood D'Estaing's character, was well content to allow his operations to take the form of a siege rather than of a storm. He counted not only upon the impatient character of the French commander and of his unwillingness to subordinate his own voluntary movement to the coöperation of the allies, but also upon the real danger to the French fleet and army, separated as they were from each other, from the active and daring operations of the British navy, as well as from tempests usual in the autumn and so often destructive to ships on the coast. Prévost did not waste his force in attempts, therefore, to impede the advance of the allies; only two sorties were made during the siege, from neither of which did any material consequence ensue.

All of the guns of the allies opened on the 4th of October, and upon this Prévost asked that the women and children might be permitted to leave the town and embark upon board of vessels in the river, which should be placed under the protection of Count D'Estaing, and intimated that his own wife and family would be the first to profit

by the indulgence. This request, dictated by the claims of humanity, and in no way injurious to the besiegers, was rejected by Lincoln and D'Estaing.¹ Fortunately, however, for the inhabitants, as well as the garrison, although an incessant cannonade from so many pieces of artillery was continued from the 4th to the 9th of October, less injury was done to the houses in the town than might have been expected; few lives were lost, and the defences were in no respect materially damaged.

Prévost was wise in preserving his full strength for the decisive hour. It came in time; already Count D'Estaing had spent one month in an enterprise which, from information he had received at Cape François, he calculated would have detained him scarcely longer than his conquest of Granada — certainly not more than ten days. Nor were Governor Rutledge and the French consul mistaken when they had so represented to him. Any five hours before the junction of Colonel Maitland had been sufficient to have taken Savannah;² and even after this there can be little doubt that if the French and American armies had marched into Savannah when they arrived on the 17th, they would easily have carried the town.³ But the delay in the face of the excellent officers and veterans of the British army was fatal. The French naval officers, too, became anxious for the safety of the fleet and desirous of changing their station. Then the affairs of the West Indies, to which in D'Estaing's estimation these were but secondary, began to demand his attention. He accordingly informed Lincoln that the siege must be raised forthwith or a storm attempted. Lincoln had no alternative. How-

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 138; *Hist. of Am. War*, Steadman, vol. II, 127; *Annual Register*, vol. XXII, 211.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 139.

³ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 42.



ever sincerely he must have wished for a continuance of the siege, safe and sure as it was, and having the assurance of the engineers that it would require but ten days more to work into the enemy's lines, he could not hesitate to abandon it and to put everything to the hazard, rather than give up the enterprise entirely; and so a council of war, called by D'Estaing, decided. It is said, upon unreliable authority however, that a sentinel on duty at the door of the tent overheard the decision of the council and deserted in the darkness of the night, carrying to the British the plan of attack.¹

The town of Savannah is situated on the southern bank of the river of the same name. Its northern front was secured by the broad river, and, at the time of the siege, its western side was also covered by a thick swamp and woody morass communicating with the river above the town. The other sides were originally open toward the country, which in front of them, for several miles, was level and entirely cleared of woods. But they were at this time covered with a line of works, the right and left defended by redoubts, and the centre by seamen's batteries in the front, with impalements and traverses thrown up in the rear to protect the troops from the fire of the besiegers. The whole extent of the works was surrounded with abatis. The redoubts to the right toward the swamp were three in number. That in the centre was garrisoned by two companies of loyal militia, with the North Carolina regiment of Loyalists, under Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton, to support them. Captains Raworth and Wylie, of the South Carolina corps of King's Rangers, were posted in the redoubt on the right. Captain Tawse, with his corps of provincial dragoons, dismounted, in that on the left, called the Spring Hill redoubt, supported by a regiment

¹ *Life of Marion* (Weems), 31.

of South Carolina Loyalists, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Browne, the same who had been tarred and feathered for his adherence to the King in 1775.¹ To the right of the whole was a sailors' battery of nine-pounders covered by a company of the British legion, under the command of Captain Stewart. Between the centre and the Spring Hill redoubt was another of these batteries, under the direction of Captain Manby, behind which were posted the grenadiers of the Sixteenth Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Glazier, with the marines which had been landed from the ships of war. The whole of the force on the right of the lines was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Maitland, upon whom was to fall the brunt of the assault. On the left of the lines were two redoubts, strongly constructed with a heavy framework of the green, spongy wood of the palmetto, filled up with sand and mounted with heavy cannons; one of these was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Cruger and the other by Major James Wright,² having under him the Georgia Loyalists. Behind the impalements and traverses in the centre of the works were posted the two battalions of the Seventy-first Regiment, two regiments of Hessians, the New York Volunteers, a battalion of Skinner's Brigade, one of De Lancey's, and the light infantry of the army, under the command of Major Graham, all of which corps were ready to act as circumstances should require, and to support any part of the lines that might be attacked.

To facilitate the attack of the besiegers, Major L'Enfant, with five men, on the morning of the 8th of October,

¹ Captain Alexander Campbell Wylie, a captain in the King's Rangers. *The Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 730. We can find no other mention of Captains Raworth or Tawse.

² Son of Sir James Wright, Royal Governor of Georgia, and grandson of Chief Justice Wright of South Carolina.



advanced under a heavy fire from the garrison to kindle the abatis; but the dampness of the air and the moisture of the green wood, of which the abatis was composed, prevented the success of this bold undertaking.

The morass upon the British right, stretching from the river and covering a quarter of the town, gave a concealed approach from a sink in the ground along its margin leading to the British right. This hollow way gave great advantage to the assailants, as it brought them close to the works unperceived and uninjured. Then the small distance to pass over when discovered and exposed to the enemy's fire diminished greatly the loss to be sustained before they reached the ditch. Prévost was fully aware that this was his vulnerable point and to be especially guarded, and so it was that he placed there his best troops, under his best officer, Colonel Maitland; and it will be observed that among his best troops, then, he ranked the King's Carolina Rangers, commanded by Colonel Browne, no doubt still burning to avenge his brutal treatment in Augusta four years before. The same reason which led Prévost so strongly to guard this portion of his line, pointed it out to D'Estaing and Lincoln as the point of attack.

On the evening of the 8th, General Lincoln issued his orders for the battle. The infantry destined for the attack were to be divided into two bodies: the first composed of the light troops, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Laurens;¹ the second of the Continental battalions and the first battalion of the Charlestown militia; the whole were to parade at one o'clock on the morning of the 9th. The guards of the camp were to be formed of the invalids, who were charged to keep the fires burning as usual. The

¹ These men were composed of companies detached from the Continental regiments.

cavalry were to parade at the same time as the infantry and to follow the left column of the French troops, to precede the column of the American light troops, and were to endeavor to penetrate the enemy's lines toward the river. The American artillery were to follow the French of that arm. The whole were to be ready by the time appointed, with the utmost silence and punctuality, and to march the instant Count D'Estaing and General Lincoln should order. The militia of the first and second brigades, General Williamson, and the second battalion of the Charlestown militia were to parade under the command of General Huger. Five hundred of them were to be drafted, and the remainder to go into the trenches. With the five hundred drafted General Huger was to march to the left of the enemy's lines and remain there as near as possible without discovering his position until four o'clock in the morning, at which hour the troops in the trenches were to advance to the attack upon the enemy.¹ Then General Huger was to move and make his attack as near the river as possible. General Huger was charged that though his attack was intended only as a feint, yet should a favorable opportunity offer, he was to improve it and push into the town. The Spring Hill battery, garrisoned by South Carolina Loyalists, was to be the main point of attack, and the assailants were to be the Charlestown militia and the South Carolina Continentals. The main battle as it happened was thus to be fought by Carolinians on both sides. The attack on the right was to be made in two columns, the first of these columns

¹ In Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 134, it is said: "On retiring from the siege of Savannah the Virginia Dragoons and infantry were detached to Augusta." We have no other mention of Virginia troops at the siege of Savannah, than in the *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette* of October 27, where in the list of killed and wounded we find among the wounded "Virginia Levies" Lieutenants Parker and Walker.



destined to attack the Spring Hill redoubt in front, commanded by Count D'Estaing in person, assisted by General Lincoln; while the other, commanded by Count Dillon, was to move along the edge of the swamp, pass the redoubts, and get into the rear of the British lines.

The morning of the 9th came, but the attack, instead of being made at four o'clock, was delayed until it was clear daylight. General Huger found a rice-field through which he had to wade, and as he emerged he was received with music and a warm fire of artillery and musketry, upon which, losing a few men, his militia retreated faster, it is said, than they had advanced. Count Dillon's column mistook its way from the darkness of the morning and was entangled in the swamp, from which it was unable to extract itself until broad daylight appeared and exposed it to the view of the garrison and the fire from the British batteries. The fire was so hot and so well directed that this column was not able even to form. The darkness, however, which had caused Count Dillon to lose his way in the swamp, so befriended the column of D'Estaing and Lincoln that it was not discerned until it had approached very closely the Spring Hill redoubt.

Here the battle of the day was fought. D'Estaing, with 3500 French troops, and Lincoln, with 600 South Carolina Continentals and 350 Charlestown militia, advanced to storm the works. As soon as discovered they were received with a continued blaze of musketry from the redoubt and a destructive cross fire from the adjoining batteries, which mowed down whole ranks as they advanced. But regardless of the fatal fire from the covered enemy the column, unappalled, with Lincoln and D'Estaing at its head, McIntosh being in immediate command of the Continentals, forced the abatis. From the numbers which fell, the head of the column was several

times thrown into confusion, but the places of those who fell being instantly supplied by others, it moved on until it reached the redoubt, where the contest became more fierce and desperate. The brave Captain Tawse of the South Carolina Loyalists fell in defending the gate of his redoubt, with his sword plunged in the body of the third assailant he had slain with his own hand. The parapet was reached both by the French and the Carolinians, and each planted their standards upon it.

The second South Carolina Continentals had had the post of honor in the defence of Fort Moultrie on the 28th of June, 1776, and a few days after the battle Mrs. Barnard Elliott had presented to it an elegant pair of colors, and in doing so had said: "Gentlemen—Soldiers. Your gallant behavior in defence of your country entitles you to the highest honors! Accept these two standards as a reward justly due to your regiment; and I make not the least doubt but that under heaven's protection you will stand by them as long as they can wave in the air of liberty." Her anticipations were fully justified. During this assault the colors she had presented were both planted in the British lines. This regiment, now under Lieutenant Colonel Marion, was one that reached the parapet of the Spring Hill redoubt. Lieutenant Bush, supported by Sergeant Jasper, carried one of the colors. Lieutenant Gray, supported by Sergeant McDonald, the other. Bush, being wounded early in the action, delivered his standard to Jasper for its better security, but did not leave the field. Jasper, who himself was already wounded, on receiving a second and fatal shot, restored it to Bush, who, on taking it again, received another, and this a mortal wound, and fell into the ditch with the colors under him, where they were found by the enemy. Lieutenant Gray, who had the other colors, was likewise mortally



wounded, but Sergeant McDonald planted them on the redoubt, and succeeded in carrying them off in safety when the retreat was ordered. The regiment lost also Major Charles Motte early in the action.

The conflict for the possession of the redoubt continued to be obstinately maintained on both sides. It was the turning-point of the battle. All was lost to the British could this lodgement have been maintained; but Lieutenant Colonel Maitland, seizing the critical moment, ordered the grenadiers of the Sixteenth Regiment with the marines to move forward and charge the assailing column, already staggering under the obstinate resistance it had met at the redoubt and the slaughter which had been made by the artillery from the different batteries, and now also from an armed brig in the river. This fresh body, under Lieutenant Colonel Glazier, assumed, it is said, with joy the arduous task of recovering the lost ground. With unimpaired strength it fell upon the head of the victorious column under General McIntosh, which, though piercing the British line in one point, could not spread along the parapet. The victory was suppressed in its birth. The triumphant standards of the French and of the Carolinians were torn down and the assailants repulsed. Many of these, thrown back into the ditch and huddled together without order, were unable to use their arms and were unmercifully slaughtered. The remnant, finally driven out from the ditch, left their dead and wounded behind them. About the time Maitland was preparing this critical movement, Pulaski, at the head of two hundred horse, attempted to make his way between the redoubts, and thus get into the rear of the enemy; but charging at a full gallop he received a mortal wound from one of the galleys in the river. Repulsed in every point of attack, after they had

stood the enemy's fire for fifty-five minutes, the allied generals drew off their troops. The French lost very heavily. Count D'Estaing himself was twice wounded, and lost in killed and wounded 337 men. The South Carolina Continentals lost 250 men out of 600 carried into action.¹ The Charlestown militia, though in the hottest of the fight, it is said, lost but six wounded, and the intrepid Captain Shepherd killed.

After the repulse the idea of taking Savannah by regular approach was again for some time renewed, but the naval officers of Count D'Estaing were uneasy at the situation of his fleet and pressed his departure.² He remained long enough, however, to allow an opportunity for the expression of the mutual dislike between the French and the Carolinians. The French affected to despise their allies, styled them insurgents in common conversation, and even in written memorials, and attempted to throw upon Lincoln the blame of the refusal to allow the women and children in Savannah to return from the garrison. While, on the other hand, the Carolinians resented their arrogance and criticised their military conduct, Major Thomas

¹ The exact loss in the South Carolina troops is not definitely settled. The following are the estimates: *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 142, 240; *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, October 27, 1779, 250; Ramsay's *Hist. of Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 40, 257; *Hist. Am. War* (Steadman), vol. II, 131, 264; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 41, 457.

List of officers killed and wounded:—

Killed: Majors Motte, Wise; Captains Shepherd, Donnom; Lieutenants Hume, Wickham, Bush, Bailey.

Wounded: Brigadier General Count Pulaski (mortally); Major L'Enfant; Captains Roux, Rendelo, Farrar, Giles, Smith, Warren, Hogan, Davis, De Treville; Lieutenants Gray, Petrie, Gaston, De Saussure (mortally), Parker, Walker, Beraud, Wade, Wilkie, Vieland, Parsons.

Volunteers: Mr. Jones, *killed*; Mr. Lloyd and Mr. John Owens, *wounded*.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 42.



Pinckney, who was on Lincoln's staff and accompanied D'Estaing by his request, had informed the Count of the condition of Maitland's detachment, and of the ease with which it could be captured; but the Count was too great a man to receive advice from a young provincial officer. Was he not the conqueror of Granada? Nor could Colonel Laurens induce him to march at once upon Savannah before Maitland arrived. Carried away by his success in the West Indies, he imagined he could take Prévost at his leisure as easily as, with a fleet and 900 men, he had captured Lord Macartney and his garrison of 300, of whom only 150 were regulars. But with his excitable and changeable disposition, upon which Prévost had so well counted, he could not endure with patience the slow progress of a siege; and so, having allowed Prévost full time to put Savannah in the best possible condition for resistance, he broke off the siege and assumed the offensive. To this the South Carolinians were as much opposed as they had been in the first instance to the delay of the attack. It was easy to plead the danger to his fleet on the coast, but the season of the equinoctial gales had nearly passed, and though his fleet was soon after dispersed, there was at the time of the siege little more reason to apprehend such a gale than at any other season of the year. D'Estaing might go as he had come, and soon forget the dead he had left behind, especially as some of them were negroes and mulattoes from the West Indies. But it was a very different matter to the Carolinians and Georgians, who had risen under the promise of his assistance. He left them in a much worse condition than that in which they were before he arrived.

D'Estaing reëmbarked his troops, and on the 19th General Lincoln retreated with the Americans as far as Ebenezer Heights, and leaving his army there to follow

him he proceeded to Charlestown. There the small-pox broke out soon after, and thereupon the remnant of the militia dispersed to their homes. Thus ended a campaign from which much had been expected, but which had disastrously failed from the arrogance and folly of D'Estaing, and the want of energy of Lincoln. For however justly D'Estaing may be blamed for his delay in the first instance and his rashness in the second, it must be remembered that he had been before Savannah seven days before Lincoln joined him with his force; and had Lincoln been more prompt, and had he been in his place, the truce might have been rejected and the town taken before Maitland could have effected his junction with Prévost.



CHAPTER XX

1780

A BRIEF, but somewhat more particular, review of the British operations in the Northern States since the defeat of the fleet and army on the 28th of June, 1776, will enable us the better to comprehend and appreciate those now undertaken in the South, and especially in South Carolina.

Upon the repulse of the British fleet and army the expedition returned to New York, where it arrived just in time to allow Sir Henry Clinton to take part in the battle of Long Island in August, 1776, and the subsequent occupation of the city of New York in September. Then had followed the battles of White Plains, New York, 28th of October; Fort Washington, 16th of November; Trenton, 26th of December, 1776, and 2d of January; and Princeton, 3d of January, 1777. The result of these and many other smaller affairs, however, had been indecisive. Sir William Howe had fought and won one great battle — that of Long Island — and had occupied the city of New York; but notwithstanding his superiority in men and materials, Washington successfully confronted him in the Jerseys and restricted him to the immediate vicinity of New York.

The year 1777 was one of the most momentous of the American Revolution. It is remarkable for great events, and some extraordinary as well. A grand plan of campaign had been devised and sent to London and adopted by the British ministry, but it was not carried out; and why it was abandoned had long remained a mystery, until

the discovery not many years ago of the treason of General Charles Lee in a paper written by him when a prisoner in New York, recommending to his Majesty's commissioners, Lord Howe and General Sir William Howe, a plan of operations against his own people, which providentially they accepted and appear to have acted upon, to the abandonment of that which had been approved by the ministry. From the beginning of the winter of 1776-77 General Howe had been sending home plans for the ensuing campaign, the primary object of which, repeatedly declared, was a junction of the two armies,—that in Canada and his own,—by movements at once up and down the Hudson River. His own movement northward, to be accompanied by an irruption into New England, he wrote, "would strike at the root of the rebellion and put those Independent Hypocrites between two fires," "and open the door wide for the Canada army." The principal feature of these plans had received the approbation of the King, who, with the ministry, Parliament, and the nation, expected by the possession of the lakes and the North River to complete the separation of the Northern and Southern colonies, and insure the subsequent conquest of America in detail. This plan was suddenly abandoned, and its abandonment by Sir William Howe corresponds with the date of "Mr. Lee's plan,¹ 29th of March, 1777." Lee's plan, which

¹ "Mr. Lee's Plan, March 29, 1777." *The Treason of Charles Lee, Major General, etc.*, by George H. Moore, librarian, New York Historical Society, New York. Charles Scribner's, 1860, particularly pp. 84-91. See also Gordon's *Am. Revolution*, vol. II, 553; vol. III, 576, where it is intimated that the plan originated with a Pennsylvania refugee. In manuscript notes upon Steadman's *History*, attributed to Sir Henry Clinton, is this, "I owe it to truth to say that there was not a man in the army except Lord Cornwallis and General Grant who did not reprobate the movement to the southward, and see the necessity of a coöperation with General Burgoyne."

it appears he had not only the treachery, but the audacity, to suggest to the British commander while himself his prisoner, was that adopted by Sir William Howe when he sailed from New York to the Delaware and made his campaign against Philadelphia. In the meanwhile Burgoyne, relying upon Sir William's coöperation, had begun his expedition down the lakes, which ended in his surrender. The treason of the man who would have abandoned Fort Moultrie on the 28th of June, 1776, had now misled Sir William Howe to his ruin. The battles of Brandywine and Germantown had been fought and won by him, and Philadelphia occupied; but Burgoyne's army had been lost. Sir William was discredited and resigned — discredited beyond the possibility of redemption by the vain-glorious and absurd Mischianza, which by contrast rather brought out his failure in more vivid colors.¹

Sir Henry Clinton, who had found the water too deep

¹ The famous Mischianza (or Medley) was a festival given in honor of Sir William Howe, by some of the British officers at Philadelphia, when he was about to give up his command and return to England. This entertainment not only far exceeded anything that had ever been seen in America, but rivalled the magnificent exhibition of the vainglorious monarch and conqueror, Louis XIV of France. All the colors of the army were placed in a grand avenue three hundred feet in length, with the King's troops between two triumphal arches for the two brothers — the Admiral Lord Howe and the General Sir William Howe — to march along in pompous procession, followed by a numerous train of attendants, with seven silken knights of the blended rose and seven more of the burning mountain, and fourteen damsels dressed in the Turkish fashion, to an area of one hundred and fifty yards square, lined with the King's troops, to the exhibition of a tilt with tournament or mock fight of old chivalry in honor of those two heroes. On the top of each triumphal arch was the figure of fame bespangled with stars, blowing from her trumpet in letters of light, *Tres lauriers sont immortels*. Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. I, 385. The unfortunate Major André, at that time a captain, was one of the chief promoters of this absurd pageant. *Life of Washington* (Irving), vol. III, 403.

to cross from Long to Sullivan's Island on the 28th of June, 1776, and who — however much he may have criticised Sir William Howe's folly in abandoning Burgoyne for the campaign in the Middle States — had not escaped censure himself for failing to afford such assistance to Burgoyne as he might have rendered, for he commanded in New York in Howe's absence, was now appointed Commander-in-chief of the British forces, and named as one of the commissioners under the conciliatory acts of which we have spoken. He had evacuated Philadelphia, and on his march to New York was pursued by Washington and attacked at Monmouth on the 27th of June, 1778, from which he only escaped by the dilatoriness, if not again the treason, of Lee, who had been exchanged and restored to his command.

Upon his return to New York Sir Henry Clinton turned his attention to the South, and, as we have seen, sent Colonel Campbell to coöperate with General Prévost from Florida in operations against Georgia. These operations had led to Prévost's invasion, which came so near resulting in the capture of Charlestown.

It is not surprising that Sir Henry, upon assuming the chief command in America, should have turned again to the scheme of establishing a government in the back parts of North and South Carolina, the inhabitants of which were yet believed ready to rise and welcome a restoration of Royal authority. Events subsequent to the attempt in 1776 had rather strengthened the belief in the feasibility of that undertaking, and it was with great confidence assumed that if the King's arms could once reach those regions, especially that about Cross Creek, North Carolina, now Fayetteville, the people there would flock to the Royal standard, and large reënforcements would be obtained to his Majesty's forces. From that point, with increased

numbers, the Royal army might proceed to Virginia, and thence on to the Chesapeake. This plan of carrying his Majesty's arms "from South to North"—an idea, it is said, that the ministry had long conceived—Sir Henry now undertook to carry into effect.¹ The first plan of operations, it will be observed, had been the cutting off of New England and New York by combined movements from New York and from the lakes; that had been neglected for a less effective one, that against Philadelphia. Now was to be tried another grand movement: that of "from South to North," combined with another favorite idea of the ministry, to wit, "the conquering of America by Americans," that is, by the reënforcements to be obtained in the backwoods of the Carolinas. The first step in this campaign was the capture and possession of the city of Charlestown; and for this purpose Sir Henry Clinton was now to put forth his whole power.

The operations of the British army in South Carolina during the year 1779 had disclosed at once the wealth of the State and its weakness in a military view. That incursion into South Carolina, says an English historian,² added much to the wealth of the officers, soldiers, and followers of the camp, and still more to the distresses of the inhabitants. The devastations committed, adds this writer, were so enormous that a particular relation of them would scarcely be credited by people at a distance, though the same could be attested by hundreds of eyewitnesses.³ But all this booty had been secured during a mere raid into the State, and from the country around the post at Beaufort, which they still retained. It was but a

¹ Clinton-Cornwallis controversy, growing out of the campaigns in Virginia, 1781. B. F. Stevens's *Compilation*, 1888 (London), vol. I, 144.

² Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. III, 259.

³ See, also, to the same effect, Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 120.

taste of what was in store for the invaders if regular operations were undertaken and war really transferred to this State. Prévost had been near enough to Charlestown, too, to learn of its great importance to the other States; for though the town was too far away to be under the protection of Washington's Continental army, still it was the mart for supplying goods to most of the States south of New Jersey, and it was the port to which the privateers resorted with their prizes. Its harbor was crowded with shipping. How great was its importance in this respect will be appreciated from the following casual notice in the *Gazette* of the State of South Carolina of November 5, 1779: "Last Sunday his Most Christian Majesty's frigate *Iphigene*, commanded by M. de Kerfaint, sailed upon a cruize. 'Tis remarkable that during the time this ship was in the port, tho' there were near one thousand foreign sailors here at once, not the smallest riot happened." To break up this rendezvous of foreign vessels in sympathy with the Revolutionists was of itself of great importance to the British authorities.

Prévost's invasion, though not immediately successful in itself, had found also the true approach to Charlestown, and had demonstrated that it was not by the sea front, but through the inlets and sea islands to the rear of the town. It had tried also the sentiment of the people, and had shown that there existed great divisions among all classes. It had shown, too, that the Revolutionary government could not rely upon the militia it might bring into the field, not only because of the divisions among the people, but because men, however patriotic, would not leave their families to the mercy of the negroes upon their plantations in the face of an invasion.

Washington, having all the Continental forces, except those of South Carolina and Georgia, with him upon the

Hudson and around New York, had strongly intrenched himself and could not be induced by Sir Henry Clinton to leave his fastnesses and meet him upon the field. Sir Henry therefore determined to draw in all his forces around New York and transfer a large part of them, for the winter season at least, to South Carolina, hoping quickly to crush the small American force there and take the city before assistance could be obtained from France, which was now expected. Rhode Island was evacuated, the troops and stores brought away, the garrisons brought off from Stoney and Verplanck's points, and all his forces concentrated at New York, which he put in the strongest condition of defence.

Admiral Arbuthnot arrived about this time with a fleet bringing 3000 fresh troops and a supply of provisions and stores. The number of British troops in America on the 1st of December, 1779, amounted to 38,569, which were distributed as follows: New York and its dependencies, 28,756; Halifax and Penobscot, 3460; Georgia, 3930; West Florida, 1787; Bermuda and Providence Island, 636.¹ Washington's army, as we have seen, was nominally 27,000 strong. It was apparently practicable, therefore, now that D'Estaing had gone to the West Indies and left the coast clear, and now that he had the fleet under Arbuthnot to convoy his army, for Sir Henry Clinton to transport a sufficient force to strike a successful blow in South Carolina during the months in which operations were suspended at the North. With ordinary weather ten days was sufficient, as it was supposed, to reach Charlestown by sea, while it would take Washington three months at least to reënforce Lincoln with any body of the troops on the Hudson.² As soon, therefore, as Sir

¹ *British Forces in America*; summaries from State Papers Office, London; Washington's *Writings*, vol. V, 542.

² *Annual Register* (1780), vol. XXIII, 217.

Henry Clinton had received positive information that D'Estaing had departed with his fleet from the American coast, he ordered a number of transports to be fitted up for the reception of a corps of 8500, with horse ordnance and victualling vessels requisite for such an army.

Washington received reports of the fitting out of the expedition, and at once conjectured its destination. Colonel Laurens, his former aide, had come on to him from South Carolina, sent by Lincoln, to represent the defenceless condition of the State and to appeal for assistance.

Lincoln's force at this time consisted of the South Carolina Continentals, which were now so reduced by death, desertion, battles, and the expiration of their terms of service, that they did not exceed 800;¹ a detachment of Virginia Continentals, under Lieutenant Colonel William Heth, numbering about 400,² which had arrived the December before;³ and a body of cavalry, consisting of Colonel Horry's dragoons; the remains of Pulaski's legion, under Major Vernier, which, however, all together did not muster but 379 men.⁴ Excepting the militia, Lincoln's whole force, therefore, at this time, did not muster 1600 men. Of the militia he had about 2000, including the Charlestown battalion of artillery, Colonel Simons's Charlestown Regiment, and General Lillington's North Carolina Brigade.⁵

Washington, however, before Colonel Laurens's arrival, as soon as satisfied that Clinton's destination was South

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 46.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 145.

³ *Gazette of the State of So. Ca.*, December 8, 1779.

⁴ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 50.

⁵ Upon the surrender the Charlestown militia numbered 1086, but these included the sick and infirm besides the wounded. Lillington's North Carolina militia numbered 1000. Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 52.



Carolina, had ordered the North Carolina Continental Brigade, under General Hogan, to march to reënforce Lincoln. This brigade, when it passed Philadelphia, numbered about 700 men; recruits had been gathered for it at Halifax in North Carolina, but they were not sent forward.¹ The brigade did not reach Charlestown until the 3d of March, 1780, nearly three months after the march was commenced, the extreme cold and deep snows having retarded their progress. Upon Colonel Laurens's appeal Washington wrote to Congress proposing, ill as he could spare them, to send the whole Virginia troops, amounting to 3000 and odd,² except those whose term of service would expire by the last of January. But he went on to point out to Congress that from the great distance from New York to Charlestown, from the fact that Virginia, the home of these troops, lay in the way, and from the inclement season he was persuaded that if the troops proceeded by land their number would be so reduced by fatigue, sickness, and desertions, and the expiration of their enlistments, that their aid would be of scarcely any consideration when they arrived. In this view he suggested to Congress to provide for their transportation by sea from the Chesapeake Bay with a good convoy. Congress having consented to allow the Virginia troops to go, on the 13th of December Washington wrote to General Woodford, expressing his pleasure that the rear of the column would march the next morning, and informing him that Congress had determined that the whole should move by water from the head of the Elk River to Williamsburg and thence by land to South Caro-

¹ *No. Ca., 1780-81* (Schenck), 32.

² *Washington's Writings*, vol. VI, 417; July 17, 1780, MS. Lincoln papers, collection of Thomas Addis Emmet, LL.D., New York; *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1807 (Smyth), 352-355.

lina. He warns him of the danger of desertion as the troops pass through their own State, and exhorts him to vigilance and care in preventing it. "Nothing," he writes, "will make me happier than to hear at all times that the Virginia line distinguishes itself in every quality that does honor to the military profession. Its composition is excellent, and a strict discipline will always entitle it to vie with any corps in this or any other service." Colonel Washington, with Bland and Baylor's horse, not probably numbering more than 100, joined General Huger at Monck's Corner about the 1st of April. It was not until the 6th that General Woodford,¹ with 750 Continentals, reached Charlestown, and to accomplish this he had made a march of 500 miles in twenty-eight days, thus showing his command worthy of the confidence with which Washington regarded them. These North Carolina and Virginia troops, amounting in all perhaps to 1500 men, a few Continental horsemen, under Colonels Washington and White, two frigates, a twenty-gun ship, and a sloop of war composed all the aid which Lincoln received from Congress.

Lincoln had received assurances from Governor Rutledge that he would call down 2000 of his militia, and from Governor Caswell of North Carolina that he would send on the remainder of the drafts made the fall before, amounting to 1500, when called for, and that he would permit General Rutherford to march with all the volunteers he could collect, which Lincoln was encouraged to believe would amount to 500 more. Lincoln was promised also 900 troops from Virginia, besides the Virginia line and Washington's horse which General Washington had proposed to send, returned to him as 3000 and odd.

¹ William Woodford, Brigadier General, Continental army; taken prisoner at Charlestown, May 12, 1780; died November 13, 1780.



In all, therefore, he hoped to have 9900 men in addition to the South Carolina and other Continentals, in all about 10,000.¹ But the South Carolina militia from the country refused to enter the town on account of the smallpox, which had made its appearance there, and but few of the North Carolinians came. None of the Virginia State troops appeared. General Scott,² who had been expected, came himself, but brought not a single man with him. Of the reënforcements promised, Lincoln received but 1950.³

On the 26th of December, 1779, Sir Henry Clinton, satisfied of the departure of the French fleet, turned over the command of the King's troops at New York to Lieutenant General Knyphausen, and with Earl Cornwallis embarked with four flank battalions, twelve regiments and corps, — British, Hessian, and provincial, — a powerful detachment of artillery, two hundred and fifty cavalry, and ample supplies of stores and provisions. Vice Admiral Arbuthnot, with a naval force superior to anything in the American seas, sailed as a convoy to the expedition. For a few days the weather proved favorable; the Admiral led the van and kept inshore, but a succession of storms arose and dispersed the fleet, and scarcely any of the ships arrived at Tybee in Georgia, the appointed place of rendezvous, before the end of January; some were taken, others separated, one ordnance vessel foundered most of the artillery,

¹ Lincoln's *Letter to Washington*; Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. III, 348.

² Charles Scott, Brigadier General, Continental army.

³ Of South Carolina militia	300	
Of North Carolina militia	300	600
Of General Hogan's brigade	600	
Of the Virginia line from the army	750	1350
		<hr/> 1950

— Lincoln's *Letter to Washington*.

and all the cavalry horses perished. These accidents deranged and impeded the intended attack upon Charlestown; but Sir Henry and Admiral Arbuthnot devoted themselves with great energy to remedy their misfortunes, and in this they were greatly assisted by the troops who had so gallantly defended Savannah the October before, and who now welcomed the arrival of the Royal army.

Tarleton, in his history of the campaigns of 1780 and 1781, observes that according to the American accounts the delay occasioned by the damage sustained on the voyage gave them a favorable opportunity to augment the fortifications of Charlestown and render them formidable; but if so the delays and accidents which befell the King's troops in their voyage did not in the end prove a real calamity, for it allowed the Americans so to strengthen their fortifications as to induce them to believe they could hazard their lives and fortunes upon the event of a siege, and thus concentrating their forces in the town allowed the British, by the decision of a single operation, to capture their whole force. The observation was without doubt just, and Washington took the same view.

The British ships injured in the voyage having been refitted, the fleet, with the transports, sailed from Tybee to North Edisto; and on the 11th of February the troops were disembarked on John's Island, about thirty miles below Charlestown. Part of the fleet was immediately sent round to block up the harbor by sea whilst the troops made their way across James Island, opposite the town, taking possession of John's Island and Stono Ferry, James Island, Perroneau's Landing, and Wappoo Cut. The advanced part of the King's army occupied the Ashley River opposite the town. Such was the extreme caution of Sir Henry Clinton in establishing and fortifying posts to preserve his communications with the sea, that it was not

until the 29th of March that the advance of the army crossed the Ashley River and landed on Charlestown neck.

The Assembly was sitting in Charlestown when the British made their appearance on the Edisto. They immediately adjourned, and all officers, many of whom were members of the legislature, were ordered to their posts. Before the Assembly adjourned, however, they delegated still greater power to the Governor and the Council than they had done on the former occasion — power by which for two years John Rutledge was enabled to keep up an organization of the government, and almost alone to carry on the war. The power delegated to him was, "*till ten days after their next session to the Governor, John Rutledge, Esquire, and such of the Council as he could conveniently consult, a power to do everything necessary for the public good except the taking away the life of a citizen without a legal trial.*"¹

Acting upon this power Governor Rutledge issued a proclamation requiring "such of the militia as were regularly drafted, and all the inhabitants and owners of property in the town, to repair to the American standard and join the garrison immediately, under pain of confiscation."² But the proclamation was met by a counter one from Sir Henry Clinton, not only as Commander-in-chief of his Majesty's forces, but as commissioner for restoring peace and good government in the provinces in rebellion, offering a free and general pardon for all treason and treasonable offences theretofore committed, with the strongest assurance of effectual countenance, protection, and support; and warning the people of the guilt and danger of refusing such

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 48. No copy of the act conferring this authority and power upon the Governor and Council has been preserved. From the power thus conferred upon him John Rutledge is commonly spoken of as "The Dictator."

² *Ibid.*

gracious offer, and by an obstinate perseverance in rebellion continuing to protract the calamities of war.¹ Between these proclamations; between the imposing array of the well-equipped British army and navy on the one hand, and the few ragged Continental soldiers under Lincoln on the other; and between the threat of confiscation by a government that now was reduced to but one man, and the dread of the smallpox in the town, there was but little response to Rutledge's call. Williamson had a camp of militia at Augusta, and it was hoped that one thousand more could be got from his brigade, and General Richardson and Colonel Kershaw were trying to raise the militia about Camden; but the militia would not come into the town, declaring that they were afraid of the smallpox breaking out when they were cooped up in it, which they said would be worse to them than the enemy.² This unforeseen difficulty, a natural apprehension, whether advanced now merely as an excuse or not, should of itself have determined Lincoln to abandon the attempted defence of the town. The epidemics of smallpox which had prevailed in the town in 1738 and in 1760 had been peculiarly fatal.³ The people in the country naturally dreaded a recurrence of it, and it was idle to suppose that any body of the militia could be induced to incur this risk in addition to the dangers of a siege.

In 1779 Spain had joined France in the alliance against Great Britain, and Don Juan de Miralles, the Spanish agent, was urging Washington to make a diversion with the troops

¹ *The Siege of Charlestown by the British Fleet and Army under the Command of Admiral Arbuthnot and Sir Henry Clinton, which terminated with the Surrender of that Place, 12 May, 1780.* J. Munsell, 1867 (edition of 100 copies), 24.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 47.

³ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 180, 423, 427.



of the United States against the British in Georgia.¹ Governor Rutledge seized upon this opportunity if possible to obtain assistance from that quarter. Lieutenant Colonel Ternant² was dispatched in the *Eagle* pilot boat to Havanna, with solicitations for assistance. He was authorized to promise two thousand men to coöperate with the Spaniards in the reduction of St. Augustine if they would now lend a force of ships and men sufficient for the defence of Charlestown.³ Colonel Ternant got back on the 20th of March, but to the great disappointment not only of the people generally, but of those in command, he brought no assistance.⁴ Moultrie, writing the day before Colonel Ternant's arrival, was in high spirits, telling his friends in the country that if the British fleet remained on the coast much longer,⁵ they might be surprised by a Spanish fleet. The people, indeed, still clung to the hope even after his return. Report asserted the evening after his arrival that three seventy-fours and thirteen frigates, with three thousand land forces, might be expected every hour.⁶ But they did not come. The Governor of Havanna doubted his authority to accede to Rutledge's proposition, and no assistance could be obtained from that quarter.

Sir Henry Clinton had heard, however, of all these assurances of reënforcements to Lincoln and of the hourly additions expected from Virginia and the two Carolinas, and so he, too, determined to call for reënforcements.⁷ The

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 475.

² Jean Baptiste Ternant, Lieutenant Colonel and Inspector, Continental army; served with Pulaski's legion; afterwards commanded Armand's partisan corps or legion.

³ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 48.

⁴ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 92.

⁵ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 58.

⁶ *Diary of the Am. Revolution* (Moore), vol. II, 271.

⁷ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 6.

corps which he had brought with him was about 8500 men.¹ A part of this had been left in Georgia, bringing with him to Charlestown some 6000.² From the garrison at Savannah he now called for 1200 more, and sent orders to the North for a reënforcement of 3000.³ The British army besieging the town was about 13,000 men, and these the very flower of the British troops in America.⁴ Indeed, in an extract from a letter dated Camp Charlestown, May 8, 1780, published in Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, June 10, 1780, it was stated that the retinue of the Royal army under Sir Henry Clinton amounted to *Thirteen thousand five hundred and seventy-two men*;⁵ but this was after the arrival of Lord Rawdon with the reënforcements from New York for which Sir Henry had called. This was the largest British force engaged in any single operation during the Revolution, except in the expedition against Philadelphia, in which Sir William Howe had between 15,000 and 18,000.⁶

On the 19th of February General Lincoln, whose headquarters were then in the city, ordered General Moultrie to proceed to Bacon's bridge, across the Ashley, about two miles above Dorchester, that is, about twenty-four

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 3.

² *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 32.

³ *Ibid.*; Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 55; Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. III, 353.

⁴ Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 274; Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. III, 357.

⁵ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 142. Returns in British State Papers Office puts the effective force at 12,847. *So. Ca. in the Revolutionary War*.

⁶ *Life of Washington* (Irving), vol. III, 126. The British army during the siege of Boston numbered 10,000. At the battle of Long Island Sir William Howe had 9000, with which he landed, and was reënforced by Sir Henry Clinton from Charlestown with possibly 3000, making his whole force 12,000.^a Burgoyne's army was about 9000.^b

^a Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. I, 191, 198.

^b *Ibid.*, 359.



miles from Charlestown, and to form a camp there of the militia of the neighborhood and of those who were ordered to the town. There was also under his command there the cavalry, amounting to 379, and a body of Continental light infantry of 227, which had been drawn from the three Continental regiments and organized into a corps under Lieutenant Colonel Marion, until Lieutenant Colonel Henderson should relieve him, when Marion was ordered to report to General Lincoln in the town.¹ Moultrie's command amounted in all to 606. He was ordered to remove all the horses, cattle, carriages, boats, and everything that could be of use to the enemy or facilitate his march, excepting only what was necessary for the support of the families left behind. He was to scour the country between that and the Stono and keep Lincoln informed of any movement they might make in that direction. Three days after assuming command, on the 23d, Moultrie writes to Lincoln, giving him such information as he had obtained with his cavalry, under Major Jameson,² and reporting that he had not one single militiaman doing duty there; that he was informed that they were patrolling in their different districts, but that they declared against going into town, as they were afraid of the smallpox. He informed Lincoln that the enemy were collecting flat-bottom boats, and warns him of the danger of their effecting a crossing by other means to the western part of the town. He wrote to the same effect to Governor Rutledge. On the 25th he again reports ninety flat-bottom boats and canoes as having gone down the Stono to Wappoo Cut a few days before. The next day he sends prisoners taken by his cavalry, but again reports that there was no militia at the post. He had, however,

¹ *Documentary Hist.* (Gibbes), 1781-82, 9, 10.

² John Jameson of Virginia of Second Continental Dragoons.

ordered Colonel Skirving to send his militia to disperse the disaffected who were gathering in arms. Lincoln writes on the 29th to Moultrie very indignantly in regard to the militia who were so unreasonable as to avoid the town. "Are not," he asks, "the North Carolinians here who have not had the smallpox? Have they views and interests that the inhabitants of this State have not? Surely no! The safety of the town depends upon their coming to its assistance." He insisted that they should be sent, and went on to say that he had made the strictest inquiry, and that there was then no smallpox in the town. The garrison, he said, was so weak he should be obliged to send for the light troops as soon as Moultrie could get a hundred or two militia to join him. Moultrie was taken sick and had to be relieved. General Huger was sent out, on the 9th of March, to take command of the post.¹

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 47, 55.

In the *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 68, we find the following:—

"EXECUTION OF COLONEL HAMILTON BALLENDINE.

" (From Dunlop's Packet of April, 1780.)

" WILLIAMSBURG IN VIRGINIA, APRIL 18.

" On the 5th Ult. was hanged at Charlestown, South Carolina, Colonel Hamilton Ballendine, for drawing Draughts of the town and Fortifications. He was taken by a Picquet Guard, which General Lincoln sent out that Night to Stono, as he was making his Way to the enemy; and when he was hailed by the Guard his Answer was, 'Colonel Hamilton Ballendine.' The Guard told him that would not do, and carried him to the commander of the Picquet, upon which he pulled out of his Pocket the Draughts. The Officer told him he was mistaken, and carried him to General Lincoln, who ordered him for Execution."—*New York Royal Gazette*, April 16.

See, also, Moore's *Diary of the Revolution*, vol. II, 260. The story is also incorporated in the text of the *Annual Register for 1780* (London), vol. XXIII, 222, in which it is said that Ballendine suffered "the unpitied death of a traitor." Both Simms (*So. Ca. in the Revolutionary*



It was the general, if not the universal, opinion that the naval vessels, under Commodore Whipple, sent by Congress, lying within the bar, would effectually secure it against attack from the sea; and it was not until some time after the arrival of the ships that Lincoln had an intimation that to occupy a station near the bar would be attended with hazard. At the first suggestion of this difficulty he wrote, on the 30th of January, to Commodore Whipple upon the subject, directing him at once to have the bar sounded and buoyed by his officers and pilots, and, with the captains of the several ships, himself to reconnoitre the entrance of the harbor and to ascertain whether there was a possibility of the ships lying in such a manner as to command the passage. Commodore Whipple reported that when an easterly wind was blowing and the flood making in, which would be the opportunity the enemy would take to come in, there would be so great a swell as to render it impossible for a ship to ride moored athwart, and that upon such an occasion the enemy's ships, under full sail, if they crossed the bar, would with this advantage get to Fort Moultrie before the Continental

War, 177) and Draper (*King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 22, note) call attention to the fact that the story is mentioned by none of the South Carolina historians, nor any of the Charlestown diarists or letter writers. Draper seems to doubt if there was any such person. In the *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, June 9, 1775, *Hamilton Ballentine* advertises a power of attorney to receive a legacy due and collect the assets of an estate. There was therefore doubtless such a person, but what became of him is not further known. His name is not on the list of those whose estates were confiscated (*Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. VI), where it probably would be found had the story been true. It is scarcely possible that such an event would have been overlooked by all the writers and diarists of the time, and not have been preserved by local tradition; and yet the particularity of the statement, and its acceptance by the *Annual Register* at the time, would suggest that there must have been some foundation for the statement.

ships could possibly do so. But Lincoln, impressed with the necessity of resisting the enemy's fleet in crossing the bar, and thus annoying them while lightening their heavy ships across, if not altogether preventing them, on the 12th of February addressed another letter to the Commodore, requesting that his ships should be stationed as near the bar as possible so as best to command the entrance of it. To this the Commodore reported that on examination he found that there was not sufficient depth of water to lie near enough to the bar to command its entrance. Lincoln did not expect and would not accept this report, but on the 26th again wrote to the Commodore that as the design of his being sent to the department was, if possible, to protect the bar of the harbor, he would not abandon the purpose but on the fullest evidence of its impracticability. He therefore requested a report to be made to him of the depth of water in the channel from the bar to what was called Five Fathom Hole, and what distance that was from the bar. Whether in that distance there was any place where his ships could anchor. If the Commodore could not anchor so as to cover the bar, Lincoln asked him to give his opinion where he would lie so as to secure the town from an attack by sea and best answer the purposes of his being sent here. He begged that the Commodore would consult the captains of the several ships and the pilots of the harbor. Lincoln regarded the matter of so much importance that he spent two days in a boat examining it for himself. In reply to Lincoln's request the captains and the pilots gave their opinion that the ships could do more effectual service for the defence and security of the town by acting in conjunction with Fort Moultrie, than attempting to defend the entrance of the harbor. They thought that the channel was so narrow between the fort and middle ground, that is, the shoal upon which the



Actæon ran aground in the battle of the 28th of June, 1776, — the same upon which Fort Sumter now stands, — that the vessels might be moored so as to rake the channel and prevent the enemy's troops being landed to annoy the fort. This was, indeed, the proper position for Whipple's ships to have taken, leaving the rough water off Morris Island and taking their position there to await with cross and raking fire the appearance of the British ships as they ran past Fort Moultrie.

In consequence of this report the ships were withdrawn from the bar, and removed to act in conjunction with Fort Moultrie. An attempt was made to obstruct the channel in front of the fort, but from the depth of water, the width of the channel, and the rapidity of the tide, the attempt proved abortive.¹

On the 20th of March, writes Peter Timothy in his journal, "The crisis of our fate approaches pretty near. . . . This morning, soon after five, signals were made. At six the admiral's (Arbuthnot's) flag was shifted to the *Raisonable*, and all the men-of-war, except the new admiral's ship, loosed their topsails. They were under way in five minutes; and at half-past seven every one safe anchored within the bar without meeting the least accident."² Lincoln, yielding to Whipple's fears, had withdrawn the American fleet, with 152 guns, from the entrance of the harbor, and allowed the British men-of-war, lightened of theirs, to cross the bar without a gun aboard. Such timid councils were to prevail still further. It was evident, it was urged, that the British fleet, having a far superior naval force, would, with a leading wind and tide, pass the fire of Fort Moultrie, break through

¹ Lincoln's *Letter to Washington* (MS.), Emmet's collection; *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1897 (Smyth), 364, 374.

² *So. Ca. in the Revolutionary War* (Simms), 89.

our line of ships, and then come to immediately, having our ships between them and the fort. So a council of war was called, and the result was that the ships were ordered as soon as possible to return from their station near the fort and proceed to the city, where their guns should be taken out and disposed in the different batteries, to be manned by the sailors under the command of their respective officers, the ships themselves sunk to obstruct the channel.¹ Such was the ignominious end of the fleet sent by Congress to assist South Carolina in her dire necessity. Had Moultrie been in command, somebody would have been hurt before the harbor was abandoned.

Timothy was right; this was the crisis of the fate of Charlestown. If the harbor was not to be defended, so soon as it was so determined the town should have been evacuated and Lincoln's army marched to meet the few Continental troops on their way to join him. This was Washington's opinion. In a letter to Colonel John Laurens, April 26, 1780, he says:—

"I sincerely lament that your prospects are not better than they are. The impracticability of defending the bar I fear amounts to the loss of the town and garrison. At this distance it is difficult to judge for you, and I have the greatest confidence in General Lincoln's prudence; but it really appears to me that the propriety of attempting to defend the town depended on the probability of defending the bar. In this, however, I suspend a definitive judgment and wish you to consider what I say as confidential. Since your last to me I have received a letter from General Lincoln in which he informs me that the enemy had got a sixty-four-gun ship over the bar, with a number of other vessels; and that it had been determined to abandon the project of disputing the passage by Sullivan's Island and to draw up the frigates to the town and take out their cannon. This brings your affairs nearer to a dangerous crisis and increases my apprehensions."

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolutionary War* (Simms), 99; Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II. 60.



General Lincoln in his letter to Washington gives his reasons why the defence of Charlestown was undertaken:—

“Though I pretend not,” he writes, “to plead an express order of Congress directing y^e defence of Chas.Town,—yet must observe that the following facts of theirs conveyed an idea to me that it was their intentions that the measure should be adopted, and that it was right in itself—circumstanced as we were.

“As early as Jany. 1, 1776, when Congress were informed that an attack was intended upon Chas.Town they immediately recommended that a vigorous defence should be made.

“In y^e beginning of y^e year 1779 when Congress were informed that y^e subjugation of So. Carolina was an object which claimed the enemy’s attention—they sent Lt. Col. Cambray an Engineer to So. Carolina for the express purpose of fortifying y^e town of Chas.Town (in which business he was employed until its surrender).

“On ye 10 November following when y^e enemy’s designs no longer remained a doubt, they (Congress) ordered three of y^e Contin’l Frigates to Chas.Town for y^e defence of its harbour, and on my frequent representations to yem, that succours were necessary for defending y^e town, they ordered them accordingly,—and at no time intimated to me that my ideas of attempting the defence of it were improper—

“That y^e measure was right in itself, circumstanced as we were, will I hope appear when it is considered that Chas.Town is the only mart in So. Carolina and y^e magazine of the State—That its natural strength promised a longer delay to y^e enemy’s operations than any other port in y^e country—

“In abandoning it we must have given up the Contin’l ships of war and all our stores while there was yet a prospect of succour—for the harbour had been blocked up by a superior naval force previous to the debarkation of the Troops—The Stores could not have been removed by water, and y^e waggons we had or could have procured would have been unequal to y^e transportation of our baggage and our field artillery. The place, abandoned, would have been garrisoned by an inconsiderable force while the enemy’s army would have operated unchecked by our handful of troops, unable to oppose them in y^e field, or impede their progress through the country—and had our expected succours arrived, we could only have ultimately submitted to y^e inconveniences of an evacuation without our stores, where further opposition no longer availed,” etc.

These, in his own words, were Lincoln's reasons for entering upon the defence of the town and cooping himself upon its narrow peninsula, from which nothing but a decisive victory could release him, rather than abandoning the town at the outset, to take the field with his army and put himself in a position to meet and receive the reënforcements he believed to be coming, and with them in open battle to have contested with Sir Henry Clinton for the possession of the State. But these, his reasons, will not bear examination under the circumstances.

The question at this time was not as to the importance of the town, nor as to the value of the stores it contained. There was no doubt about either. The question was as to the practicability or possibility of its defence. This question he himself decided wisely or unwisely, when he abandoned the harbor to the enemy. It should have been as plain to him as it was to Washington, that the fate of the town was involved in that of the defence of the harbor. With an overwhelming force in the rear of the town it was useless to continue its defence when the harbor was given up. When he withdrew the fleet, but one avenue of escape remained, — but there was one, — that across the Cooper River at Lemprière's Point, or as it was also called Hobcaw, but this became daily more and more precarious, and would be closed by Sir Henry Clinton's land force as soon as his reënforcements arrived, if not before by Admiral Arbuthnot's from the sea. The opinion which Washington so cautiously expressed to Laurens before the event he still held and expressed years afterwards when he viewed the situation on his visit to Charlestown. If the town and its stores were worth risking the loss of his whole army in a siege, it was worth the risk of the loss of the Continental frigates in resisting the entrance of the British fleet into the harbor. It would have been better



to have had them lost in an engagement in which they might have at least done some compensating injury to the enemy's vessels than to have had them ignominiously sunk in the channel; better that their guns should have gone down in an action on the bar than to have remained to swell the trophies of the enemy upon the capture of the town.

It may well, too, be asked if Lincoln regarded the defence of the town so peremptorily required by his instructions from Congress, why had not those same instructions prevented his march into Georgia the preceding year at the risk of its loss; or at least hastened his return in response to Moultrie's repeated messages? General Woodford, we shall see, with his Virginians, making a march of five hundred miles in less than a month to reënforce him and help save the town; while he, the year before, went into camp forty miles from Charlestown, though Moultrie was in the direst need of his aid.

The truth seems to be that Lincoln was himself a brave, amiable man and no doubt a valuable officer under Washington; but he possessed neither the indomitable will and heroic courage of Moultrie, nor any of the great qualities of leadership which Sumter, Marion, and Pickens were soon to display.



11



CHAPTER XXI

1780

SIR HENRY CLINTON had been in possession of James Island since the 11th of February; but it was not until the 7th of March, nearly a month after his landing, that he commenced his movements for its investment. This delay is inexplicable unless it is attributed to the usual dilatory conduct of the British generals throughout the war, excepting Lord Cornwallis; or perhaps to the deliberate purpose of inducing General Lincoln the more effectually to shut himself up in the town.¹ But however this may be, it was not till the latter date that the British in any force crossed Wappoo Cut, which separates James Island from the mainland. A small command under a colonel had been kept at Ashley Ferry, twelve miles from the town;² but on the 7th of March one thousand grenadiers and light infantry crossed the cut and advanced to within three miles of that post, taking possession of the land on the Ashley opposite the town.³ The immediate inducement of the move appears to have been the capture of a large number of cattle which had been collected on Ashley River.⁴ The movement was unexpected, and the militia and the drivers in charge of the cattle were taken, and Thomas Farr, the Speaker of the House of Representatives,

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 146, note.

² McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 87.

³ Philip Nyle to Lincoln, Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 56.

⁴ J. L. Gervais, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 81.

his son, a little boy, and Mr. Lloyd¹ were surprised at breakfast and carried off. Mr. Farr was made to perform the undignified task of driving the cattle for his captors, who encouraged him in doing so by calling to him, "Keep up, Mr. Speaker, keep up."²

On the 12th, to the astonishment of the people in the town, a battery appeared with five embrasures at Fenwick's Point on Wappoo, on a line with the prolongation of Tradd Street in the town,³ nothing of which could be seen the evening before; and by seven o'clock they had heavy cannon mounted. The British continued erecting batteries on the right bank of the Ashley, and by the 18th were at work upon one near Old Town. This work was designed to cover their stores and their crossing to Gibbes's Landing, about two miles from town,⁴ when they should have secured the possession of the neck.

About this time, the middle of March, General Patterson crossed the Savannah with the reënforcements from Georgia for which Sir Henry Clinton had sent, and which consisted of the garrison from Savannah, including the famous Seventy-first Regiment, now under the command of Major McArthur, since the death of Lieutenant Colonel Maitland; the light infantry, commanded by Major Graham; the infantry of the British Legion, by Major Cochrane; the American Volunteers, by Lieutenant Colonel Ferguson; the New York Volunteers, by Colonel Turnbull; the South Carolina Royalists, by Colonel Innes; and the North Carolina Royalists, by Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton; and a number of dragoons, in all about fifteen

¹ John Lloyd; see *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrary), 606, 607, 610.

² Thomas Farr was elected Speaker in place of John Mathews elected to Congress. *Gazette of State of So. Ca.*, August 11, 1779.

³ The present site of Phosphate Works.

⁴ The present site of Wagener's Driving Park.

hundred men.¹ This body had marched up the Savannah on the Augusta road for forty miles, and crossed at a ferry called the Two Sisters, encamping in a field occupied by General Moultrie the May before. On the 13th Colonel Ferguson, with his volunteers, and Major Cochran, of the legion, were ordered forward to secure the passes across the rivers, in doing which and approaching the Combahee the parties mistaking each other for Americans came in collision, and before the mistake was discovered several were killed and wounded.²

The order for this reënforcement from Prévost's army in Georgia had been received just before the celebrated Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, who was to bear so prominent a part in the war in South Carolina, had arrived at Tybee with his dragoons. Upon his arrival he was disappointed at finding that the horses which had been embarked at New York in excellent condition had all been lost on the voyage, and that he could find none to replace them in Georgia. In this emergency he proceeded to Port Royal and collected there, from friend and foe, all the horses on the islands in the neighborhood. But these marsh tackeys of the coast, which were all he could obtain, proved scarcely strong enough for the work of his dragoons. This, however, did not discourage the enterprising officer, but only determined him to secure a better mount as soon as possible; a determination which the want of proper caution on the part of his opponents soon enabled him to carry out.

While the militia of the country could not be induced, with but few exceptions, to come into the town, Williamson and Pickens were enabled to bring some of them into the field to hang upon the flanks of Patterson's command

¹ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 157.

² Tarleton's *Memoirs*, 7; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 157, 160.



and to impede, to some extent, his progress. But notwithstanding their efforts Tarleton joined Patterson on the 21st, and the whole command arrived at Stono Creek on the 25th, where the Commander-in-chief visited the welcome addition to his army. On their way they had surprised a party of fifty militia, under Major Ladson, and killed or captured the whole party.¹ Contemporary with this great addition to Sir Henry Clinton's force the time of the North Carolina Brigade, under General Lillington, in Charlestown, one thousand strong, expired, and though the most liberal proposition of large bounty was made to them they could not be induced to remain.² These troops, whose conduct in coming into the town had been held up by General Lincoln as an example to the South Carolina country militia, now in the face of the approaching enemy laid down their arms — General Lillington himself refusing to stay. Except about one hundred and seventy, who agreed to remain under Colonel Lytle, they all left the town on the 24th of March.³ Fortunately,

¹ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 161; Timothy, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 95. Banastre Tarleton, who from this time is to play a most distinguished part in the conduct of the war in South Carolina, was born in Liverpool, England, on the 21st of August, 1754. He had begun the study of the law, but when the war in America commenced he entered the army, and came hither with Cornwallis. He served that officer in all his campaigns in this country, and ended his military career in Yorktown in 1781. Tarleton's corps was recruited and organized in New York, and was therefore a body of Americans. It consisted of light cavalry and infantry, and was called "The British Legion." After the Revolution Tarleton became a member of Parliament, and one of the Prince of Wales's (afterward George IV) set, competing with his Highness for the favors of the famous Mrs. Robinson. Lossing's *Field Book of the Revolution*, vol. II, 401; *Memoirs of George IV* (Robert Huish, London), note to p. 74. See also Garden's *Anecdotes*, 284; *British Military Library*, vol. II, 1.

² Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 53.

³ J. L. Gervais, in *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 91; McIntosh, *ibid.*, 92; P. Timothy, *ibid.*, 95.

their places were supplied, to some extent, by some of the country militia, who, overcoming their fears of the small-pox, had come into the town. Colonel Garden had brought in a hundred of these a day or two before,¹ and they now amounted to a sufficient force to be put into a separate body under the command of the gallant General Lachlan McIntosh of Georgia, who had voluntarily come into the garrison a few days before.² The fleet having been withdrawn from the harbor, the garrison of the town was increased by twelve hundred sailors, who now manned their guns, taken from the sunken vessels and placed in the fortifications. But with this addition the number of men in garrison was still by far too few to defend the works, near three miles in circumference.³

St. Michael's steeple, which had served as a beacon, was blackened when the British fleet appeared off the bar; a device, however, which the British declared made it more conspicuous than ever. In this steeple Peter Timothy took his post, as in a watch tower, and made his observations and notes of the movements of the British fleet and of the army on James Island.⁴ From this post he could see the gathering of the British forces and the arrival of the reinforcements under Patterson. With his spyglass he could see Lord Cornwallis and a Hessian general viewing the works they were erecting at Wappoo, and distinguish the Tories with them by their costumes. But when he turned from watching this army growing on the Ashley, for the attack upon the town, he looked in

¹ Gervais, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 38.

² Lachlan McIntosh of Georgia, Colonel First Georgia Continentals, January 7, 1776; Brigadier General, Continental army, September 16, 1776.

³ Colonel Laurens's Letters; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 48.

⁴ The steeple was again used as a signal station in the war between the States.



vain for any movement at Haddrell's or at Lemprière's Point on the Cooper telling of the coming of the Virginians whom Washington had sent, or those which the State of Virginia had promised. Colonel Laurens had written on the 25th of February: "The Virginia troops are somewhere! Assistance from that sister State has been expected these eighteen months!"¹ But assistance had not yet come. Indeed, no more was to come from that State. A gallant band, few in numbers, but admirable in spirit, Woodford's Continentals, were to arrive during the siege and to do excellent service; but no troops were to come from that State itself, or from any other.

On the 23d, after crossing the Ponpon or Edisto River, Tarleton with his dragoons had fallen in with a party of militia at Lieutenant Governor Bee's plantation, had killed ten of them and taken four prisoners, and in their first encounter secured a number of good horses. Three days after, however, this was counterbalanced in the first meeting between Tarleton and his equally distinguished opponent, Lieutenant Colonel William Washington,² who, having already served with distinction in one Northern

¹ Laurens's Letters; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 48; Tarleton's *Memoirs*, 34.

² William Augustine Washington, styled "the modern Marcellus," "the sword of his country," was the eldest son of Bailly Washington of Stafford County, Virginia, where he was born on the 28th of February, 1752. He was educated for the Church, but the peculiar position of political affairs led him into the political field. He early espoused the patriot cause, and entered the army under Colonel (afterward General) Hugh Mercer, as captain in the Third Virginia. He was in the battle of Long Island, distinguished himself at Trenton, where he was wounded, and was with General Mercer when he fell at Princeton. He was then made Major in Colonel Baylor's corps of cavalry, and was with that officer at the slaughter of his corps at Tappan in 1778. He was now about to enter upon a distinguished career in this State. *Lossing's Field Book of the Revolution*, vol. II, 435; *Garden's Anecdotes*, 284.

my was now transferred to South Carolina with the remains of Bland's, Baylor's, and Moylan's Virginia regiments of horse.¹ This first encounter between these great cavalry leaders took place at Governor Rutledge's plantation between Rantowle's Bridge and Ashley Ferry. In this affair Washington drove back the cavalry of the British Legion under Tarleton and took several prisoners, including Colonel Hamilton of the North Carolina Royalists and a British surgeon. Colonel Hamilton, of whom we have before spoken, was a valuable prize, but Washington was hunting much bigger game, and came near capturing Sir Henry Clinton himself on his visit to the newly arrived reinforcements from Georgia.²

On this same day, 26th of March, now that the British were advancing against this town, Lincoln's army moved into their lines and took their positions. These works that had been thrown up the spring before upon Prévost's invasion, had been strengthened and extended while Sir Henry Clinton was waiting his reinforcements. Lines of defence and redoubts had been continued entirely across the Neck from Cooper to Ashley rivers. The lines began on Town Creek, a branch of the Cooper, at a point just below the present site of the railroad depot in Chapel Street, and to the north of where then stood the Liberty Tree; then running on a line passing close by the present site of St. Luke's Church and the Second Presbyterian Church in Charlotte Street, they crossed Meeting Street,

¹ The First Continental Dragoons (Bland's), now commanded by Colonel Anthony Walton White of New Jersey; the Third Continental Dragoons, now commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Washington; and the fourth Continental Dragoons, Colonel Stephen Moylan of Pennsylvania. Neither Colonel White nor Colonel Moylan appears to have been present.

² Tarleton's *Memoirs*, 8; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 161. We have no mention of the numbers of either party.



where now was reached a large hornwork, crossing King Street, — then the only road to the country, — a remnant of which work is preserved and is still to be seen on Marion Square. Thence the line of fortifications ran through the present Vanderhorst Street, crossing the present site of St. Paul's Church, where it rested upon the creek which ran up between Cannonsborough and the town just east of the present Smith Street. This constituted the main line. South of this on the Ashley there were batteries on Coming's Point, that is, the land south of what is now known as Bennett's Millpond and between Bull and Beaufain streets. There was a line of works also on South Bay, extending from the Ashley to the Cooper, and including the former Lytleton's and Granville's bastions.¹ In front of these lines on the Neck was a strong abatis and a wet ditch, picketed on the nearest side. The lines were made particularly strong on the right and left, and so constructed as to rake the wet ditch in almost its whole extent. In the centre a strong citadel was erected. Works were thrown up on all sides of the town where a landing was practicable. Colonel De Laumoy and Lieutenant Colonel De Cambray, two French engineers in the service of Congress, were indefatigable in strengthening the lines.² But, after all, these were little more than field works. In manning the lines the North Carolina regulars (Hogan's) were posted on the right; the Virginia battalion (Heth's) next; then Lytle's North Carolina corps, those who remained when the rest of the brigade, under General Lillington, left; and then the South Carolina regulars on the left,³ at a battery known as Coming's Point.⁴

¹ See the map accompanying Mayor Courtenay's centennial address, *Year Book*, 1883.

² Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 49.

³ *So. Ca. in the Revolution*, 100.

⁴ Between the western ends of Wentworth and Bull streets.

The militia were posted at the less exposed positions on South Bay and other parts of the town.¹ General Moultrie was ordered to direct the disposition of the artillery of the different batteries and works in and about the town.² A council of war, consisting of the generals and field officers, was held on the 27th at the headquarters, which were in Tradd Street, to consider the propriety of evacuating Fort Moultrie at once, now that the harbor was abandoned; but it was decided not to do so.³

While Lincoln was thus posting his troops and holding his first council, the British were slowly but steadily advancing up the Ashley, and Captain Elphinstone of the Royal navy, having stationed his galleys to protect the boats, the army began to cross the river at Ashley Ferry and at Drayton Hall on the 29th. This they were allowed to do without the slightest opposition. In his letter to Washington Lincoln says he had to lament that the state of the garrison would not admit of a sufficient force being sent to annoy them in crossing the river, but that his whole number at the time in garrison amounted to only 2225. It is true that the circumstances were different from those of Prévost's invasion the year before, and Lincoln, if he was to attempt to hold the town, could not now bring out the army to meet Clinton at his crossing, as Moultrie should have done to meet Prévost; for the British now had a large army, with boats and abundant means of crossing the river between Old Town and Gibbes's Landing, and thus at once capturing the town had Lincoln abandoned it to meet the British force at the ferry; whereas, the year before, Prévost had no means of crossing the river but at the ferry, and had too small an army to

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 49.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 65; *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 100.

³ McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 102.



divide for the purpose. Still, if the enemy were to be met at all outside of the city, as they were, there must have been some strong reason which restrained Lincoln from making the opposition while the British were involved in the difficulties of the crossing a bold river flanked upon both sides by an impassable marsh, the only causeway across the marsh at Bee's Ferry being easily raked by artillery. This opportunity of inflicting loss and delaying their movement was lost; but Colonel John Laurens was given the command of a battalion of light infantry of two hundred men and was sent up the *great path*, that is, the main road from the city, of the beauty of which we have before had occasion to speak,¹ to meet the enemy's advanced parties, and to retard their movements as much as possible.

On the following day, the 30th, Sir Henry Clinton ordered the light infantry and yagers, supported by the grenadiers and the other corps and regiments, to gain the road and to move toward the town.² This they did, and met with no opposition for ten miles of their march; but as they approached Gibbes's farm, about two miles from the town, their advance, about ten or twelve o'clock, met Colonel Laurens, who skirmished with them the rest of the day, being reënforced in the evening by Major Lowe,³ with ninety men and two field-pieces. This skirmish took place in view of both armies and of many ladies of Charleston, who came out to the works, and who continued to do so even after the firing from the town had begun, and would, with all the composure imaginable, watch the can-

¹ King Street Road. *Hist. of So. Ca. under Prop. Gov.* (McCrady), 342.

² Tarleton's *Memoirs*, 9.

³ Philip Lowe first entered the service as an officer in the Second North Carolina Continental Regiment, subsequently served as Major of Third Georgia.



nonading of the enemy.¹ In this first encounter of the siege Captain Bowman, of Hogan's North Carolina brigade, was killed,² and Major Hyrne³ and seven privates were wounded. On the British side the Earl of Caithness, aide-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief, was wounded, with several men. About dark Colonel Laurens and his party fell back into the lines. General McIntosh pronounced the whole affair a mere point of honor without advantage!

General Patterson had been left at Wappoo Cut, immediately west of the city, with the greater part of his command, to guard the magazines and stores while the main body gained the Neck. As soon as this was accomplished by Sir Henry Clinton, Patterson's command was crossed over at Gibbes's Landing, and communication was opened at this point, and all trouble and delay attendant upon the land carriage by the upper crossing by the way of Ashley Ferry was avoided. By this route the British now received their supplies of guns, provisions, and baggage with facility and expedition, and Sir Henry Clinton was put in immediate communication with the navy.

On the 31st of March General Scott, who had been anxiously expected with a body of Virginia State troops, arrived, but brought no troops with him. This was a great disappointment to the people of the town. The garrison were busily employed all the day strengthening the works and mounting cannon. The British broke ground at night at from ten to twelve hundred yards.

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 62; McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 104.

² Joseph Bowman, Major, First North Carolina Continental Regiment.

³ Edmund Hyrne entered service as Captain, First South Carolina Continental Regiment. June 17, 1775; Major, May 12, 1779; Deputy Adjutant General, Southern Department, November 17, 1778, to close of the war. We shall find him serving as aide-de-camp to Major General Greene in 1781-82.



No incident of consequence occurred during the first three days of April. The British were engaged opening their trenches and the Americans strengthening theirs and cannonading the British working parties. The Charlestown militia were ordered from the bay to the right of the lines. But what was of importance and encouragement was the arrival of Colonel Neville,¹ with dispatches from Woodford's brigade, announcing their approach; and later that of another messenger, on Monday the 3d, with an account that this brigade was at Camden on Wednesday the 29th, and would be within forty miles of the town that evening.

The wind had fortunately continued westwardly since the British fleet got across the bar, and they were thus prevented from attempting to come in and run past Fort Moultrie. On the 4th another work appeared on the enemy's left at Hampstead on a rising ground which commanded that which had been thrown up by Lincoln near the Liberty Tree. To silence this the Continental frigate *Ranger*, which had not been sunk, was sent up Town Creek, a branch of the Cooper, which runs in near the shore, to enfilade it; but she made very poor work with her guns, and receiving two or three shots from a field-piece brought to the side of the river by the British troops, she retired. It had been determined to send three armed vessels, with a detachment of five hundred men under Colonel Laurens, to take this work *in reverse*, but Major Clarkson,² who was sent in the *Ranger*, reported when he returned that the work was enclosed in the rear, and so the

¹ Pressley Neville of Virginia, who had first served as Major and aide-de-camp to General Lafayette, now Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.

² Matthew Clarkson, Major and aide-de-camp to General Arnold, August, 1778, and aide-de-camp to General Lincoln, March, 1779, to July 2, 1782.



enterprise was abandoned. The cannonading by the Americans was kept up all that night, and shells were thrown which damaged the British works upon Hampstead; but it was not until the next morning at seven o'clock that a shot was fired from the besiegers. At this time, the morning of the 5th of April, Mr. Thomas Horry, who was superintending the negroes working upon the lines, received a contusion from a spent musket ball, and a few shots followed afterward, but without doing any damage. The negroes were a little frightened at first, but continued their work.¹ In the evening fire was opened from the opposite side of the town. Four galleys came out of Wappoo Cut, two-thirds across Ashley River, about eight o'clock, it being very dark, and with the batteries on Wappoo Neck opened fire upon the town. This was kept up all night. The enemy's principal object was Battery No. 1 of the Americans on Coming's Point, where the Third South Carolina Regiment was posted. Their shot were twenty-four and thirty-two pounders. Several houses were struck and shattered. Mr. Morrow of the militia grenadiers was killed by a cannon ball as he stood in his own door in King Street; but one other—a soldier in Battery No. 2—was wounded. Two horses of General McIntosh's were killed on the lot of Mr. Lowndes's residence in Broad Street, in which the General was quartered.²

During the night also the enemy attempted to surprise Colonel Washington's cavalry at Middleton Place, near

¹ J. L. Gervais, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 111.

² J. L. Gervais, McIntosh, and Moses Young, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 112. Governor Rutledge wrote to General Lincoln suggesting a scheme for the surprise and capture of the galleys which had thus insulted the town; but nothing appears to have come of it. Lincoln's papers, *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1897 (Smyth), 348-349.

the head of the Ashley. For this purpose fifty horse and five hundred infantry were detached and marched to his encampment. But Washington was on the alert, and when the enemy advanced with fixed bayonets, they found the fires burning, but no troops behind. Washington had received information of the movement and had removed his camp to the twenty-third mile house. The British, disappointed, retired, and Colonel Washington, sending a party of his horse after them, picked up three of their rear-guard.¹

Both parties continued their works during the 6th, and each kept up a cannonade which was doubled during the night by the British from their galleys and batteries at Wappoo. On the 7th, Friday, the besieged were rejoiced by the arrival of Woodford's brigade of Virginians and some North Carolina militia under Colonel Harrington.² The Virginians were said to be very fine-looking troops, bearing the appearance of what they were in reality, — hardy veterans, — the sight of whom made an amazing alteration in the countenances of the citizens, who had almost despaired of their arrival. In the afternoon the lines were manned, and a *feu de joie* was fired from thirteen pieces of cannon, followed by huzzas from the troops. The Charlestown militia gave up their places on the right of the line to the newly arrived veterans, and resumed their former position on South Bay.³ Another diarist observes, however, that an opportunity was unfortunately

¹ Moses Young, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 112.

² De Brahm and McIntosh, the two usually most correct of the diarists, put their arrival as of the 6th; but Moultrie, Gervais, and Young put it as of the 7th. We have accepted the latter date, as Young gives it as "*Friday*," which was the 7th, and so does Peter Timothy, in his MS. journal, Laurens's Papers. Ramsay gives it as the 10th, but is clearly wrong.

³ Moses Young, *So. Ca. in the Revolution*, (Simms) 112.



given by marching the whole corps in regular order to their encampment to ascertain their precise number, which, not according with the expectations almost universally entertained, may have been the occasion of several desertions which happened the same night.¹ However much the people of Charlestown may have admired these gallant Virginians, who had made the extraordinary march of five hundred miles in twenty-eight days, no doubt bitter was the disappointment when it was ascertained that these seven hundred were all of the Virginia line of three thousand they had been promised who were likely to reach them in their extremity. Indeed, it seems now an act of folly to have taken these few in, if no more were to come. They were but to swell the number of captives in the town already doomed to the enemy's possession.

The wind, which had so long been blowing in favor of the beleaguered town, now at last shifted, and Admiral Arbuthnot, taking advantage of a strong southerly breeze and flood tide, signalled to Clinton that he would immediately weigh anchor and come in; the salute in honor of the arrival of the Virginians had hardly died away when the guns in the harbor announced that the fleet were passing Fort Moultrie. Timothy, from St. Michael's steeple, at half-past four o'clock saw and reported that the admiral, in the *Roebuck*, had received and returned the fire of Fort Moultrie and had passed it without any apparent damage; and that a frigate, supposed to be the *Blonde*, had also passed the fort, after receiving and returning the fire, with the loss of her foretopmast. Then the admiral, having passed above Fort Johnson, fired a gun and hoisted a striped flag at the mizzen peak. Another forty-four-gun ship, supposed to be the *Romulus*, passed the fort after a pretty smart fire on both sides, but with little apparent

¹ Thomas Wells, Jr., *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 118.



damage. The admiral then, near five o'clock, came to anchor near James Island, above Fort Johnson; a frigate with her topmast shot away did the same, and by five o'clock three other frigates had passed the fort, firing and receiving the fort's fire as they did so. Then the fire opened between the fort and the *Renown*, and by half-past five every ship of the fleet had passed the fort and come to anchor, except a transport which had run aground. Timothy, rebel as he was, could not refrain his admiration of the action of the fleet. "They really make," he says, "a most noble appearance, and I could not help admiring the regularity and intrepidity with which they approached, engaged, and passed Fort Moultrie. It will reflect great honor upon the admiral and all his captains; but 'tis pity they are not friends."¹ But Colonel C. C. Pinckney, who commanded at Fort Moultrie, had not allowed the fleet to pass without some atonement. With a garrison of three hundred men of the First Regiment he had maintained a severe fire and inflicted a loss of twenty-nine seamen, fourteen of whom were killed and fifteen wounded.² The *Acteus*, a store ship, following the squadron, had grounded near Haddrell's Point; and upon this Captain Thomas Gadsden, detached by Colonel Pinckney, with two field-pieces did her such damage that the crew set her on fire and retreated in boats to the other vessels. The Royal fleet were thus at anchor near the remains of Fort Johnson on James Island, within long range of the town batteries. Fortunately the sunken ships across the channel from the town to Shutes's Folly,³ supported by the town batteries

¹ Diary, Peter Timothy, MS. Laurens's Papers, *Promiscuous Letters*, So. Ca. Hist. Soc.

² *Journal of Operations before Charlestown; Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 124.

³ Now the site of Castle Pinckney.



and the remaining Continental fleet, prevented them from running up Cooper River and enfilading as well the town as the lines of the defence. Nothing was heard from the garrison of Fort Moultrie until Sunday afternoon, the 9th, when Major Thomas Pinckney came up and reported that not a single man had been hurt and that but about ten of the shots from the fleet had struck any part of the fort.¹

The first parallel of the enemy's lines was now completed and the town very nearly invested. There remained but the one means of communication with the rest of the world, and that was crossing the Cooper River to Haddrell's or to Lemprière's Point, or Hobcaw. This communication was difficult and precarious. These routes were each four miles across the Cooper, which here is but an arm of sea, and now that the enemy's fleet were in the harbor that to Haddrell's Point was commanded by their guns.

Sunday, the 9th of April, was spent by the garrison of the town in a series of fatigues and hard duty, with little rest, and by the people in throwing up banks of earth against their dwelling-houses to protect them as far as possible from the British shot.² It was expected that the town would now soon be summoned, — probably the next day, — and upon an answer refusing to surrender that a bombardment would commence, and be maintained incessantly from all quarters.³ This expectation was to be fulfilled. The day Admiral Arbuthnot had brought in his fleet (9th) he repaired to the camp on Charlestown Neck, where he was warmly welcomed,⁴ and where, with Sir Henry Clinton, it was determined to summon the town the next day.

¹ Moses Young, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 116.

² *Ibid.*, 113–117.

³ Thomas Wells, Jr., *ibid.*

⁴ *Journal of the Operations before Charlestown; Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 124.



On the evening of the 10th of April a flag came in from the British lines with a summons to Major General Lincoln. The summons ran thus:¹—

“CAMP BEFORE CHARLESTOWN, April 10, 1780.

“Sir Henry Clinton, K.B., General and Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's forces in the colonies, &c., and Vice-Admiral Arbuthnot Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty's ships in North America” &c., “regretting the effusion of blood and the distresses which must now commence deem it consonant to humanity to warn the town and garrison of Charlestown of the havoc and desolation with which they are threatened from the formidable force surrounding them by sea and land. An alternative is offered at this hour to the inhabitants, of saving their lives and property contained in the town or of abiding by the fatal consequences of a cannonade and storm.

“Should the place, in a fallacious security, or its commander in a wanton indifference to the fate of its inhabitants, delay the surrender, or should public stores or shipping be destroyed, the resentment of an exasperated soldiery may intervene; but the same mild and compassionate offer can never be renewed.

“The respective commanders who hereby summon the town do not apprehend so rash a part as further resistance will be taken; but rather that the gates will be opened and themselves received with a degree of confidence which will forebode further reconciliation.

(Signed)

“H. CLINTON.

“M. ARBUTHNOT.”

Without consulting any one,² General Lincoln immediately sent the following answer:—

“GENTLEMEN,—

“I have received your summons of this date—sixty days have passed since it has been known that your intentions against this town were hostile, in which time has been afforded to abandon it, but duty and inclination point to the propriety of supporting it to the last extremity.

“I have the honor to be &c.

“B. LINCOLN,

“Commanding in the South department.”

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 399; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 67.

² McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 119.



CHAPTER XXII

1780

LINCOLN, without calling a council or consulting any one, had peremptorily refused the summons to surrender; but this was his last decisive action during the siege. His conduct during the month which it was to continue was indecisive and weak. He allowed his measures to be discussed, his military councils to be interfered with and dictated to by civilians, and his authority to be slighted; and while the inhabitants of the town patiently and heroically bore the suffering and dangers of the siege, he allowed himself, without an enterprising measure or striking an efficient blow, gradually but steadily to be hemmed in, and finally compelled to accept the rejected terms without securing but partially even the honors of war for his garrison.

The day after the summons Sir Henry Clinton opened his batteries upon the town and pressed on his works. The garrison replied with vigor, the meanwhile strengthening their defences as far as possible.¹ The most important incident of this day was the loss of Major John Gillbank, one of the most valuable officers in the garrison. He was an able engineer, and was accidentally killed while making experiments with shells.²

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 14, 39; *So. Ca. in the Revolutionary War* (Simms), 119.

² De Brahm, *So. Ca. in the Revolutionary War* (Simms), 120. But see Johnson's *Traditions*, 248, where another account of the accident is given.



While Lincoln refused to surrender, on the one hand, or, on the other, to withdraw his troops from their inevitable doom unless he did so, now that but one opening for escape remained, he recognized the situation sufficiently to urge upon Governor Rutledge to leave the town while yet he might; and on the 12th he sent for the general officers and obtained their signatures to a letter urging upon the Governor and part of his Council, at least, to leave, in order that upon the fall of the town there might remain a nucleus of the government in the State. The firing continued as usual during the day, but very little at night. But on the morning of the 13th, at nine o'clock, the enemy's batteries opened with vigor, throwing bombs, carcasses, and red-hot balls. This lasted for about two hours, when the fire abated on both sides. The carcasses — combustibles confined in iron hoops — and the red-hot shot now began to do their work. The inhabitants were exposed to the burning of their houses in addition to the danger to their persons. To meet this a fire department was organized, and upon alarm the members turned out actively and crowded around the flames, to extinguish them or prevent their extension. In doing this the citizens exposed themselves more conspicuously to the enemy, and on all such occasions the British increased their fire, directing their shot and shells at the smoke. The families which remained in Charlestown amidst these exciting and alarming scenes of danger burrowed in their cellars, and generally escaped; not more than twenty of them were killed during the siege.¹

At the suggestion of General Lincoln, as we have said, it was determined that Governor Rutledge and some of the Council should leave the town. Lieutenant Governor Bee was in Philadelphia attending the Continental Congress,

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 252.



of which he was a member. The Constitution of 1778 provided that in case of the absence from the seat of government or sickness of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor any one of the Privy Council might be empowered by the Governor under his hand and seal to act in his room.¹ In the absence of Lieutenant Governor Bee, Christopher Gadsden was appointed Lieutenant Governor, and it was agreed that Colonel Charles Pinckney, Daniel Huger, and John Lewis Gervais of the Council should go out with the Governor, and that Gadsden, with the remainder of the Council, Thomas Ferguson, David Ramsay, Richard Hutson, and Benjamin Cattell should remain in the town; more to satisfy the citizens, says Gervais in his diary, than because of the propriety of the measure.² It cannot escape observation, however, that in this division of the government the old party lines were followed, Governor Rutledge taking with him the conservative members of the Council, and Gadsden retaining the most vigorous of his followers. Governor Rutledge and his party left the city on the 13th. Before he did so—that is, between nine and ten o'clock in the morning—the enemy opened all their guns and mortar batteries at once, being the first time they fired upon the town itself and from the front, and continued a furious cannonade and bombarding with little intermission till midnight, their batteries from Wappoo the meanwhile playing upon the left flank of the besieged and the town. The houses in the city were much damaged, and several were fired and burnt. A child and its nurse were killed.³

Lincoln, having thus got the Governor and a part of the

¹ *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. I, 139.

² *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 121, quoting journal of John L. Gervais.

³ *Ibid.*, 121. A child of Myer Moses (McIntosh), 122.



Council out of the town, called all the general officers to his quarters, where he gave them the *first* information in regard to the state of the garrison, its men, provisions, stores, artillery, etc., and announced to them the little hopes he had of any success of consequence and the opinion of the engineers that the fortifications were merely field works or lines, and could hold out but a few days more. With every information he could obtain of the numbers and strength of the enemy he was compelled, he said, to contemplate the necessity of evacuating the town. Upon this General McIntosh, without hesitation, gave it as his opinion that, as they were so unfortunate as to suffer themselves to be penned up and cut off from all sources, they should not lose an hour more in attempting to get the Continental troops at least out while they had one side open yet over Cooper River. He urged that the salvation, not only of this State, but of others, depended upon this movement. But Lincoln, who had himself suggested the idea, did not have the nerve either at once to carry it out or definitely to reject it; hesitating and dallying with it, he bade the officers to consider maturely of the expediency and practicability of such a measure by the time he would send for them again. The cannonade of the enemy broke up the Council abruptly.¹ Repeated efforts were made to get the Council of officers together again, but it was six days before it met,² and then information had been received of disasters which rendered the evacuation now well-nigh impossible.

General Huger had been left without the town, with Horry's horse, the remains of Pulaski's dragoons, and the recently arrived horse from Virginia. To these were added some militia of the country. The effort made on the 5th to surprise Colonel Washington at Middleton

¹ McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 122.

² *Ibid.*



Place had failed, and he had skilfully retreated to the twenty-third mile house. From this point Washington fell farther back, some twenty miles, to Huger, now at Monck's Corner, at the head of the Cooper. This position commanded the forks and passes of that river and maintained the communication with Charlestown by the roads through the parishes of St. John's Berkeley, St. Thomas, and Christ Church to Hobcaw and Haddrell's Point, on its eastern shore. This force under Huger Sir Henry Clinton determined to break up, and thus cut off the town from the means of communication. On the 12th of April, therefore, Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton, who was then posted at the Quarter House on the Neck, six miles from Charlestown, was reënforced by Major Ferguson's corps of marksmen, and advanced to Goose Creek some ten miles farther toward Monck's Corner. Colonel Webster¹ joined him on the following day with two regiments of infantry, the Thirty-third and Sixty-fourth. Tarleton again moved on in the evening with his own and Ferguson's corps. It was determined to make the attack at night so as to render the superiority of Huger's cavalry useless; profound silence was observed on the march. Fortune favored the British. A negro attempting to leave the road was secured by the advanced guard, and a letter was taken from his pocket written by an officer in General Huger's camp, which the negro was taking to the neighborhood of the town. The contents of this letter and the negro's intelligence proved lucky incidents to the enemy. Tarleton's information as to Huger's position was now complete. He knew that Huger's cavalry was posted in front of Cooper River, and that the militia were in a meeting-house which commanded Biggin's Bridge across the

¹ Lieutenant Colonel James Webster, an officer of high character, a Scotchman by birth.



river. Tarleton regarded this disposition of Huger's troops as most favorable to his attack, and proceeded at once to make it, without waiting for Colonel Webster. Led by the negro by paths through the woods, at three o'clock in the morning the advanced guard of dragoons and mounted infantry, supported by the remainder of the legion and Ferguson's corps, approached the American post. A charge was at once made on the grand guard on the main road, there being no other avenue open owing to the swamps upon the flanks. The guard was surprised. Tarleton drove at them with a vigor which was to prove habitual, and entered the camp with them. Although accoutred for action, yet so instantaneous was the assault that the American cavalry were routed without resistance. Without loss of time Major Cochrane forced the bridge and the meeting-house with the infantry of the British legion, charged the militia with fixed bayonets, and dispersed everything that opposed him. The loss of the Americans was great. Major Vernier of Pulaski's legion, three captains, one lieutenant, and ten privates were killed, one captain, two lieutenants, and fifteen privates wounded, and many prisoners taken.¹ Major Vernier was mangled in the most shocking manner, but lived for several hours, upbraiding, it is said, the Americans for their conduct, and even in his last moments cursing the British for their barbarity for having refused quarter after he had surrendered.² General Huger, Colonel Washington, Major Jameson,³ and other officers and men fled on

¹ Governor Roosevelt in his *Winning of the West*, 245, makes the curious mistake of saying that General Huger was slain in this affair. He was not. He escaped, as stated in the text, and served all through the Revolution, fighting in many battles, and surviving until the 17th of October, 1797.

² Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 183, note.

³ John Jameson of Virginia, Major, Second Continental Dragoons.



foot to the swamps and thus escaped. General Huger, with his aide, John Izard, hid all night in the swamp.¹ The exact loss of the Americans in horses, ammunition, and supplies was never ascertained with exactness.² Tarleton claimed that he captured 400 horses belonging to officers and dragoons, with their arms and appointments.³ Steadman, however, says that they had captured 42 wagons, 102 wagon horses, 83 dragoon horses, and a quantity of ammunition and supplies.⁴ The greatest gain to Tarleton was no doubt in the remount of his dragoons. A letter from the British camp, published in Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, June 21, speaks of the capture of "sixty famous horses."⁵ Monck's Corner was in the very heart of the high-bred stock-raising country,⁶ and doubtless this capture gave to Tarleton's officers many thoroughbred horses as chargers.

The conduct of the British troops up to this time had been marked by pillage and robbery — but now was to be added the most shocking outrages. Several ladies at Fair Lawn, the mansion of Sir John Colleton, a staunch Royalist, were most barbarously treated by some of the dragoons of the legion, and it does not certainly appear that the miscreants were even punished.⁷

¹ Gervais, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 138.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 154.

³ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 16.

⁴ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 183.

⁵ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 164.

⁶ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 518, 519.

⁷ Fair Lawn was a part of the original Colleton Barony, situated at the head of the navigation of the Cooper River. It was to be the scene of a severe engagement the next year. Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 182, note: "Major Birnie (Vernier) was mangled in the most shocking manner; he had several wounds—a severe one behind his ear. This unfortunate officer lived several hours, reprobating the Americans for their conduct on this occasion, and even in his last moments cursing the British for their barbarity in having refused quarter after he had sur-



As soon as Colonel Webster arrived at Biggin Bridge with his two regiments, he sent Tarleton at once to seize the boats and take possession of Bonneau's Ferry over the eastern branch of Cooper River, which was at once, and easily, done. The British, crossing first into St. Thomas's and then into Christ Church Parish, advanced, by way of Wappetaw Bridge, at the head of the Wando, to within six miles of Lemprière's Point, and Charlestown was completely invested. Lincoln's communications by Cooper River would seem now to be pretty effectually cut off. But, strange to say, not only individuals, but some considerable bodies, subsequently succeeded in getting in and out of the town by this same way. But Sir Henry Clinton was not satisfied with having secured the passes over the Cooper, and as Colonel Webster's command was not sufficient to guard all the roads through the country around, the British commander availed himself of the arrival of reënforcements from New York, for which he

rendered. The writer of this, who was ordered on this expedition, afforded every assistance in his power, and had the Major put upon a table in a public house in the village, and a blanket thrown over him. The Major in his last moments was frequently insulted by the privates of the Legion. Some dragoons of the British Legion attempted to ravish several ladies at the house of Sir John Collington (Colleton) in the neighborhood of Monck's Corner. Mrs. —, the wife of Dr. —, of Charlestown, was most barbarously treated. She was a most delicate and beautiful woman. Lady — received one or two wounds with a sword. Mrs. —, sister to Major —, was also ill treated. The ladies made their escape, and came to Monck's Corner, where they were protected; a carriage being provided, they were escorted to the house of Mr. —. The dragoons were apprehended and brought to Monck's Corner, where by this time Colonel Webster had arrived and taken the command. The late Colonel Patrick Ferguson (of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter) was for putting the dragoons to instant death. But Colonel Webster did not consider that his powers extended to that of holding a general court-martial. The prisoners were, however, sent to headquarters, and I believe were afterwards tried and whipped."



had sent, amounting to three thousand men,¹ under Lord Rawdon, and detached Lord Cornwallis, with a large part of these, to a position east of the Cooper.

In the meanwhile Sir Henry Clinton gradually but steadily advanced his approaches to the town. A slow but incessant fire was kept up from small arms, cannon, and mortars during the 13th and 14th, and on the 15th a battery of two guns opened from Stiles's Place on James Island² which played constantly on the town at a distance of about a mile. This was called by the citizens "water-melon" battery.³ A shot from the battery on the 16th struck St. Michael's steeple and carried off the arm of the statue of Pitt, which had been erected with so much rejoicing in 1770.⁴ The British bomb batteries were now advanced to within eight hundred yards of the lines of the town. On the 18th several casualties occurred; among others Mr. Philip Nyle, aide-de-camp to General Moultrie, was killed by a cannon-ball. It was now observed that the enemy did not throw large shells as they had done before, but showers of small ones from their mortars and howitzers, which proved very mischievous. The loss of the garrison this day, four killed and ten wounded. The news, too, now came that Huger had been surprised and totally routed, and that the enemy had crossed the Wando and

¹ Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. III, 353; Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 184.

² On Sir Henry Clinton's map this is put down as "Heyward's" Place.

³ Johnson's *Traditions*.

⁴ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrary), 677-678. A very tragic event took place on the 17th. One of the militia, whose family lived in a small house on the south side of what is now Calhoun Street, between King and Meeting streets, having obtained permission to leave the lines where he was serving, had just entered his home and was in the embrace of his wife when a cannon-ball killed them both at the same instant. Johnson's *Traditions*, 252.

were at the church on Hobcaw Neck. Upon the receipt of the news General Scott was at once sent over Cooper River with a body of light infantry to Lemprière's Point to keep open if possible the communication, as all the fresh provisions came from that quarter. But if the garrison could afford the detachment at all, why was it not made before and the point put in a condition of defence? If it could not be afforded before, it was useless now. As Timothy, in his journal, observed, "We generally begin things too late or are too long about them."¹

The enemy continued their approaches on the 19th to within two hundred and fifty yards of the lines of the town, and a considerable party showed themselves before the post at Lemprière's; they retreated, however, when fired upon. General Scott had no cavalry, but he mounted some men on his own and other officers' horses to reconnoitre; while doing this he was summoned to the town to attend a council of war at General Moultrie's headquarters. McIntosh tells us that this council had been attempted repeatedly before at Lincoln's headquarters, but that it was so interrupted that no business could be done.² What an insight does this passing remark of the journalist give of the condition of the garrison! A general in command could not secure himself and his officers from interruption at his own headquarters, even to consider whether the town should be further defended or not! The proceedings of the council which now met were in keeping with this extraordinary beginning. Besides the general officers, Major General Lincoln, Brigadier Generals Moultrie, McIntosh, Woodford, Scott, and Hogan, there were also Colonel Laumoy, the engineer in charge, Colonel Beekman of the artillery, and Colonel Maurice Simons, com-

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 97.

² *Ibid.*, 126.



manding the Charlestown militia. The subject of evacuation was again mooted; indeed, McIntosh says it had been discussed repeatedly since their last meeting. The council was charged with the greatest secrecy as to its proceedings, as well as to any determination that might be taken. General Lincoln thereupon laid before the council the strength of the garrison, the state of the provisions, the situation of the enemy, the information he had received as to reënforcements, and the state of the obstructions which had been made in the river between the Exchange and Shutes's Folly, and requested the opinion of council as to what measures the interest and safety of the country called them to pursue under these present circumstances.¹

Upon this request of General Lincoln, some of the officers expressed themselves still inclined to the evacuation, notwithstanding that the difficulties were much greater now than they were when discussed on the 13th. General McIntosh still was in its favor. He proposed leaving the militia for the guards in the garrison until the Continental troops left the town; but this was opposed by Colonel Laumoy, who was for offering terms of capitulation at once. And now a most extraordinary thing occurred.

In the midst of the conference Lieutenant Governor Gadsden, says McIntosh, happened to come in, — whether by accident or design he did not know, — and thereupon General Lincoln proposed that he might be allowed to sit as one of the council. What right had Lincoln to do this? Whether the Continental Congress had acted fairly to South Carolina in not doing more for her defence was a question for the civil authorities of the State to consider. If Congress had, as many believed, determined to abandon

¹ Lincoln's *Letter to Washington* (*Year Book*, 1897).



the Southern States to their fate, it was for those States in their civil capacities to say whether or not they would continue the struggle or withdraw from the Union and make their own terms with the British. But until the civil authorities of the State had withdrawn it from the Union, the armies remained under the control of Congress, and Lincoln, as its military officer, was solely responsible for the troops under his command. The usages of war allowed him to consult his officers and take their opinions, in order the more wisely to act. But the responsibility for decision he could not cast upon others; and no military usage or custom permitted him to take civilians into his council. The question he had to decide was a military one. It was whether or not, in order to save the Continental troops for the general welfare, not only of the State of South Carolina, but of the whole confederacy, he should attempt to evacuate the town. This was a question not to be decided by a town meeting, but by the commander himself; and when he took Lieutenant Governor Gadsden into council upon the subject he abandoned his prerogatives and shirked his responsibility. From this time his position was scarcely more than that of a moderator in the discussions which went on between the civil and military officers as to the abandonment of the town. In such a discussion, the dominant character of Gadsden was sure to assert itself; and from the moment he was allowed to take part in the council he became the master of it. The question from this time on was not whether Lincoln would evacuate or capitulate, but whether Gadsden would allow him to do so. Gadsden at once vigorously opposed the idea of either evacuation or capitulation. He expressed himself surprised and displeased that the idea had been entertained, though he acknowledged himself entirely ignorant of the state of provisions



and supplies. He said, however, that he would consult his Council, and promised that if it was determined to capitulate he would send in an hour or two such terms as the Council required for the citizens of Charlestown. Lincoln committed himself that no action would be taken without the consent of Gadsden and his Council.

The military council adjourned to meet in the evening at General Lincoln's headquarters. Gadsden was not at first present, but Colonel Laumoy proceeded to lay before it the insufficiency of the fortifications, — if they were worthy of being called so, — the improbability of holding out many days longer, and the impracticability of making good a retreat as the enemy were now situated, and persuaded the council of the necessity of trying to obtain terms of honorable capitulation. But now came in not only Gadsden, but the rest of his Council along with him, that is, Messrs. Ferguson, Hutson, Cattell, and Dr. Ramsay; and, says McIntosh, they used the military council very rudely. The Lieutenant Governor protested against the proceedings. He undertook to speak for the militia, though Colonel Simons, then commander, was present, and declared that the militia were willing to live upon rice alone rather than give up the town upon any terms — that even the old women were so accustomed to the enemy's shot now that they travelled the streets without fear or dread; but he went on to say that if the military officers were determined to capitulate he had his terms in his pocket ready. Upon this Mr. Ferguson, Gadsden's brother-in-law, broke out, and said that the inhabitants had observed, several days before, boats collected to carry off the Continental troops, but that they would keep a good watch upon the army, and if it were attempted he would be the first who would open the gates for the enemy and assist them in attacking the Continental troops before they



got aboard. And Lincoln submitted to this threat! Knowing Gadsden, no doubt, well, he had invited him to the council, and so must now take his advice however dictatorily given. With any regard for himself or his position, with any hope of respect for his future command, General Lincoln should not have allowed Ferguson to go from his quarters, into which he had come uninvited, except under arrest, and a prompt trial by court-martial for mutiny should have followed.

But it was not only from the civil authorities that General Lincoln was this evening to receive reproach. Soon after the Lieutenant Governor and Council had gone, Colonel C. C. Pinckney came in abruptly, and forgetting, says McIntosh, his usual politeness, addressed General Lincoln in great warmth, and in much the same strain as the Lieutenant Governor had done, adding that those who were for business required no council, and that he came over on purpose from Fort Moultrie to prevent any terms being offered the enemy or evacuating the garrison; and then, addressing himself to Colonel Laumoy, charged the engineer department with being the sole authors and promoters of any proposals. General McIntosh declares that he was so much hurt by the repeated insults given to the commanding officer in so public a manner, and obliquely to them all through him, that he could not help declaring, as it was thought impracticable to get the Continental troops out, he was for holding the garrison, that is, maintaining the defence to the last extremity. This was at once agreed to by every one but Colonel Laumoy, who insisted that they were already at the last extremity; and if the others were not of that opinion, he desired to know what they considered such extremity. But Gadsden had carried the day; it was determined to hold out, and the council adjourned for the night.¹

¹ McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 127-129.



It has been said that the citizens might well be indignant that, after being buoyed up with the assurances of the adequacy of their defences and the sufficiency of their provisions and material for the siege, they should, when too late to remove their effects and their families, be told, at the very beginning of the bombardment, that defence was impossible.¹ But this is unjust to Lincoln and cannot excuse Gadsden's conduct. The British forces had been gathering around Charlestown for six weeks before the free communication with the country was interrupted, and many of the citizens had availed themselves then of the opportunity of removing their families; and those who either had not the means to remove or had chosen to remain and take the chances of the siege, which no one doubted would be laid to the town, could not now blame Lincoln for the want of opportunity. It is not probable that any one who had remained in the town had been in the least influenced in his action by any assurance of word or deed, by Lincoln. Gadsden's conduct can only be palliated by his well-known devotion to the cause he had in a great measure inaugurated, by his patriotism which would brook no idea of submission, by his indignation at the thought of falling a prisoner into the hands of his enemy, and by the weakness of Lincoln, which had lost him the confidence of the people.

The 20th of April was a fine, but cold and windy, day. Two magazines on Gibbes's Battery, near the west end of what is now South Battery,² were blown up by the enemy's shells; fortunately only one man was hurt, but much other damage was done. The enemy's approaches continued. Lincoln again called the council together, and Colonel

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 128.

² *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1884 (Courtenay); *The Siege of Charlestown*, 1780 (De Saussure), 205.

Laumoy, notwithstanding Colonel Pinckney's reproaches the evening before, again urgently advised capitulation. He reiterated his opinion of the impossibility of the garrison holding out much longer, and the impracticability of retreat. The opposition now expected from the citizens of the town to the evacuation, the appearance of a large body of horse and foot of the enemy upon Wando Neck, and the fact that a number of the enemy's boats had been hauled across Charlestown Neck from Ashley into Cooper River, threatening to cut off all communication on that side, determined the council at last to come into Colonel Laumoy's proposal and to open negotiations with Sir Henry Clinton for capitulation. It does not appear whether Lincoln had before him the terms which Gadsden had prepared to be required by the citizens, but in a moment of resolution he drew out the articles he would propose, prepared by him with no other assistance or advice than that of Colonel Ternant.¹

On the 21st the fire from the batteries opened as usual. The killed and wounded had now become numerous.² Notwithstanding that Colonel Tinning of North Carolina with the regiments of militia, about two hundred, had managed to avoid the British and get into the town from Lemprière's Point, Lincoln sent out a flag to Sir Henry Clinton, saying that he was willing to enter into terms of capitulation if such could be obtained as were honorable for the army and safe for the inhabitants, and proposing a cessation of hostilities for six hours for the purpose of digesting such articles. Sir Henry Clinton replied that Admiral Arbuthnot should have been addressed jointly with him upon the occasion. And as he wished to communicate with the Admiral he gave his consent to a cessa-

¹ McIntosh, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 130.

² *Ibid.*



tion of hostilities for six hours.¹ This time was mutually extended by messengers between the parties. The following were the terms proposed by Lincoln:—

(1) That all acts of hostility and works should cease between the naval and land forces of Great Britain and America in this State until the articles of capitulation should be agreed on, signed, and executed or collectively rejected.

(2) That the Town, Forts, and Fortifications belonging to them (the Americans) should be surrendered to the Commander-in-chief of the British Forces such as they now stand.

(3) That the several troops garrisoning the Town and Forts including the French and American sailors, the French Invalids, the North Carolina and South Carolina militia, and such of the Charlestown militia as might choose to leave the place, should have thirty-six hours to withdraw to Lemprière's after the capitulation had been accepted and signed on both sides . . . and that those troops should retire with the usual honors of war, and carry off during that time their arms, field artillery, ammunition, baggage, and such of their stores as they might be able to transport.

(4) That after the expiration of the thirty-six hours mentioned the British troops before the town should take possession of it and those now at Wappetaw should proceed to Fort Moultrie.

(5) That the American army thus collected at Lemprière's should have ten days from the expiration of the thirty-six hours before mentioned to march wherever General Lincoln might think proper to the eastward of Cooper River without any movement being made by the British Troops or part of them out of the Town or Fort Moultrie.

(6) That the sick and wounded of the American and French Hospitals with their medicines, stores, the Surgeons and Directors General should remain in the town and be supplied with the necessities requisite until provision could be made for their removal.

(7) That no soldier should be encouraged to desert or permitted to enlist on either side.

(8) That the French Consul, his house, papers and moveable property should be protected and untouched, and a proper time granted him for retiring to any place that might afterwards be agreed upon.

¹ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 90.



(9) That the Continental ships of war, *Boston*, *Providence* and *Ranger*, then in the harbor (which had not been sunk) with the French ship of war *Adventure*, should have liberty to proceed to sea with necessary stores on board and go unmolested, the three former to Philadelphia and the latter to Cape François with the French Invalids mentioned in article 3^d.

(10) That citizens should be protected in their person and property.

(11) That twelve months should be allowed such as would not choose to continue under the British government to dispose of their effects real and personal in the State without any molestation whatever, or to remove such part as they chose, as well as themselves and their families, and that during that time they might have it at their option to reside occasionally in town or country.

(12) That the same protection to their persons and properties, and the same time for the removal of their effects, should be given to the subjects of France and Spain residing in the town as are required for the citizens.¹

Lincoln, of course, could have had no idea that such terms would be accorded him. The bare possession of the town without the land or naval forces which they had encompassed, and without a disloyal citizen recovered to the Crown, would scarcely have compensated Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot for the joint expedition, which had already occupied them four months, and for the loss of men and materials it had cost. Their object in coming was not to obtain possession of the site of Charlestown, but to put down rebellion and to restore to his Majesty the allegiance of his revolted subjects. And now they were asked to take the town with the loyal people who had required no armed force to reduce them to their allegiance and to let the rebels go, taking their time and consulting their convenience in doing so. Though we do not know that Lincoln had Gadsden's demands before him when he prepared these articles, we may be quite sure that

¹ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 91, 95.



he bore them in mind when he asked the British commander to grant these terms. Though he could not have expected to obtain such articles of capitulation, he no doubt hoped that they would be made the basis of negotiation, during the progress of which he would obtain some rest for his garrison, and at least a brief season of repose and relief to the citizens during its progress. But the respite was not long. The answer soon came and was curt and decisive. In a communication from the camp before the town, dated eight o'clock at night, the British general and admiral replied that they had, in answer to Lincoln's third article, — for they could proceed no further, — to refer him to their former offer as terms which, though he could not claim, they yet consented to grant. They required, however, that these terms should be accepted immediately, and that responsible hostages, of the rank of field officers, should be sent as securities, that the customs of war should be strictly adhered to.

A council of war was thereupon called by Lincoln, and the subject of evacuation was discussed. But this was held "inadvisable because of the opposition made to it by the civil authority and the inhabitants, and because even if they could succeed in defeating a large body of the enemy posted in their way, they had not a sufficiency of boats to cross the Santee before they might be overtaken by the whole British army." There was nothing left but a capitulation. They could not yet, however, bring themselves to the terms offered by Clinton and Arbuthnot.¹

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 77, 78.



CHAPTER XXIII

1780

A HEAVY cannonade was kept up all of Saturday, the 22d of April, and the approaches of the enemy continued. Supplies began to fail, and rations were reduced. Sunday, the 23d, passed much in the same manner, the British commencing their third parallel from eighty to one hundred and fifty yards from the American lines.¹ The only sally which took place during the siege was made on Monday, the 24th. A party of two hundred, detailed from the Virginians and South Carolinians, under Lieutenant Colonel Henderson, sallied out at daylight upon the enemy's approaches opposite the "half moon," or advanced battery, and completely surprised the enemy in their trenches. About fifteen were killed with the bayonet and twelve prisoners brought off, seven of whom were wounded. The British attempted a rally to the support of their comrades, but were repulsed. Strange to say, no British officer was found with the detachment in the trenches which were thus surprised. Unhappily, Captain Thomas Moultrie, of the Second South Carolina Continental Regiment, a brother of General Moultrie, was killed; but with two privates wounded this was the only loss of the party. The whole affair was over in a few moments, not a gun having been fired, but the bayonet only used. The retreat was effected in the greatest order. The garrison was not strong enough

¹ Gordon's *Am. War*, vol. II, 354.



to risk another sortie, however much encouraged by the success of this to do so.¹

Colonel C. C. Pinckney, with the greater part of the First South Carolina Regiment, which had been stationed at Fort Moultrie, and Lieutenant Colonel Laurens, with his light infantry, which had been posted at Lemprière's, were at this time withdrawn into the town. The passage of the enemy's fleet had rendered Fort Moultrie of little use; but Lieutenant Colonel Scott with 110 of the First Regiment and 91 militia were left to garrison the fort, for what purpose it is difficult to understand. A small party of North Carolinians, 75 in number, were sent over to replace Colonel Laurens's troops at Lemprière's, which was left under the command of Colonel Malmedy.² The day which had opened so auspiciously with the successful sally closed with the loss of a valued officer. Colonel Richard Parker of Virginia having discovered a party of the enemy working near the half-moon battery, returned to direct a fire upon them, and while looking over the parapet to do so was killed by a rifle ball. An incessant fire of cannon and small arms was kept up all this day, causing a considerable loss to the garrison. Colonel Pinckney and Colonel Laurens upon coming into the town undertook to supply the garrison with fresh beef from

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 134.

² Colonel Malmedy, a French officer, in the early part of the war served in Rhode Island, and was commissioned by that State Brigadier General. The appointment by Congress to the rank of Colonel in the Continental service, May 10, 1777, he thought inconsistent with his previous one, and made it the subject of complaint to General Washington. *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. II, Index. He commanded the North Carolina militia at Eutaw, and is said to have held a commission from North Carolina. *No. Ca., 1780-81* (Schenck), 450. He is not mentioned in the list of French officers who served in the Continental army.



Lemprière's Point; but, unfortunately, the first and only cattle butchered were allowed to spoil and utterly lost through neglect or mismanagement.

Between twelve and one o'clock on Tuesday morning, the 25th, there was a heavy fire from the advanced redoubt, which extended to the right of the lines upon what was supposed to be the enemy's advancing column. Several hurrahs had been given, and cries of the British calling the garrison "bloody dogs" were heard, but whether they had advanced beyond the trenches McIntosh, who was on duty there, was unable to say. It was forty or fifty minutes before he could stop the waste of ammunition. The enemy returned the fire smartly and threw several light balls and carcasses into the town. About two o'clock in the afternoon Lord Cornwallis, who, after the defeat of Huger at Monck's Corner, had crossed the Cooper and moved around the head of the Wando, with about three thousand men, advanced from Wappetaw Bridge and took possession of Haddrell's Point on the mainland, between Fort Moultrie and Lemprière's, thus effectually cutting off the small garrison at Fort Moultrie.¹

On Wednesday, the 26th, Brigadier General Duportail arrived, having made his way through the investing forces, and brought with him a letter from General Washington, recommending him to General Lincoln as an engineer of whose abilities and merits he had the highest opinion. Washington wrote that Lincoln would find him of clear and comprehensive judgment, of extensive military science, and of great zeal, assiduity, and bravery.² His zeal

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 134.

² Louis Lebique Duportail, a French officer, Colonel of Engineers, July 8, 1777; Chief of Engineers, July 22, 1777; Brigadier General of Engineers, November 17, 1777; subsequently Minister of War in France. By a letter of his of November 12, 1777, to the Count de St. Germain,



and bravery he had certainly shown in making his way into the town; but he brought with him no encouraging prospect of reënforcement to relieve the siege. On the contrary, he informed Lincoln that Congress had only proposed to General Washington the sending of the Maryland line;¹ that even this small reënforcement had not been decided upon when he left, though it was known to Congress that Lord Rawdon was about to sail from New York with a force of twenty-five hundred men to reënforce Sir Henry Clinton,² which troops had, in fact, reached Charlestown before General Duportail had reached Lincoln. As soon as General Duportail came into the garrison, examined the works, and looked at the investing forces, he confirmed the opinion which had been expressed by Colonel Laumoy, pronounced the works not tenable, and expressed his conviction that the British might have taken the town ten days before. He wished to leave the garrison immediately, but General Lincoln would not allow him to do so, because it would dispirit the troops. A council of war was, however, called to consider his report and it was again proposed to attempt an evacuation with the secret withdrawal of the Continental troops. But the citizens again interfered; some of them came in and, expressing themselves very warmly, declared to Lincoln that if he attempted to withdraw his troops, they would cut up his boats and open the gates to the enemy. This, he says, put a stop to all thoughts of evacuation;

then Minister of War in France, it appears that however highly thought of by General Washington, he was in this country, not from any love of Americans, or interest in their independence, but solely in the interest of France — just as it is now known that De Kalb was. See Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. I, 300; Garden's *Anecdotes*, 213; Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 494.

¹ *So. Ct. in the Revolution* (Simms), 135.

² Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 494; vol. VII, 6.



nothing was left but to make the best terms they could.¹ The shells were now doing much mischief. There were the usual killed and wounded; among them this day Lieutenant Philips, of Russell's Virginia Regiment, was killed, and Captain Goodwyn, of the Third South Carolina, wounded. Provisions were running shorter, and the allowance was curtailed. The houses of the citizens were searched, and some discovered, inadequate, however, to the supplies necessary; but the garrison, notwithstanding, continued in high spirits.² During this Wednesday night Colonel Malmédy retreated with his detachment in great confusion from Lemprière's Point, after spiking four eighteen-pounders they left behind. The British immediately took possession, and the next morning their flag was flying at this post. The investment of Charlestown was now accomplished; every avenue of escape was closed. The line of investment, commencing from James Island, immediately south of the town, running across Wappoo, passed over the Ashley at Gibbes's Landing, their field works crossing the Neck from Coming's Point on the Ashley to Hampstead on the Cooper; and now Lemprière's Point, Hobcaw, and Haddrell's on the east side of the Cooper were all in possession of the enemy. The fleet in the harbor connected their lines from Haddrell's to James Island, and the circle was complete, except that Cooper River was still open; but Lord Cornwallis was in possession of all the country bordering on it on the east, and Sir Henry Clinton guarded all its passages on the west. Yet, notwithstanding this, parties occasionally avoided the vigilance of the enemy and made their way out or in. On the 28th Major Lowe³ and

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 80.

² *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 135.

³ Philip Lowe of North Carolina, formerly of Second North Carolina; now Major, Third Georgia.



several other supernumerary officers quitted the garrison and made good their way out.¹

The enemy's batteries were remarkably silent during the day of the 29th. The British were busy pushing on their third parallel. But that night there was a heavy

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 137.

Just before the lines were thus closed an incident happened which, then without significance, proved afterward to have been of great importance if it had been understood. William Johnson, who, it will be remembered, was the first to organize the Liberty Tree party, and was throughout all the events which led up to the Revolution Gadsden's great support, was then serving as a cannoneer in Captain Heyward's company of the Charlestown battalion of artillery, stationed during most of the siege at the hornwork in the centre of the lines. Going in on a visit to the town on leave about this time, he called to see a sick friend, Stephen Shrewsbury, at the house of his brother Edward Shrewsbury, who was a Loyalist. There he saw a stranger dressed in homespun, and asked Edward Shrewsbury who he was, and was told that the stranger was a back countryman who had brought down cattle for the garrison to the opposite side of the river. The answer being prompt and plausible, nothing more was thought of the circumstance. But eighteen months afterward, while William Johnson was in Philadelphia, where he had been sent with the exiles from Charlestown who had been confined in St. Augustine, — just after the discovery of Arnold's treason and the execution of Major André, — he met his old friend Stephen Shrewsbury, who reminded him of this incident, and asked if he remembered seeing at his brother's house a man dressed in homespun. And upon Johnson's recalling the circumstance, Stephen Shrewsbury went on to say that the man was no other than Major André in disguise. That while he was sick in his brother's house he was introduced to and repeatedly saw a young man in homespun dress who was introduced to him as a Virginian connected with the line of that State then in the town, but that after the fall of Charlestown he met and was introduced to Major André at his brother's, and in him at once recognized the Virginian whom he had seen during the siege. That his brother acknowledged that it was so, but asserted his own ignorance of it at the time. If this story, which is well authenticated, is true, it appears that the occasion upon which André was captured and executed was not his first exploit within the American lines.*

* Johnson's *Traditions*, 255; Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 209, note.



bombardment. Sunday, the 30th, passed in much the same way, except that Lincoln received through the lines a letter from Governor Rutledge, encouraging him to hope for reënforcements, which would perhaps require Clinton to raise the siege. Governor Rutledge upon leaving the town endeavored to form two camps, one between the Cooper and the Santee, and the other on the Santee at Lenuds's Ferry. John Lewis Gervais, writing at the time from Georgetown, was in great hopes they would have, during the week from the 28th of April, 1500 or 2000 men on the Charlestown side of the Santee. They expected General Caswell from North Carolina with 1000 men. General Williamson was expected at Orangeburgh with possibly 900, — certainly 600, — and Colonel Thomson had there 200. There were also 400 Virginians, Buford's command,¹ at Nelson's Ferry on the Santee, about thirty miles from Orangeburgh, and the remains of the horse which had escaped from Monck's Corner were at Murray's Ferry, some twenty miles farther down the river. All these troops had been ordered to rendezvous at Lenuds's Ferry, about twenty miles from Murray's Ferry. And they hoped to throw a supply of provisions during the week into the town. Before the week was over, it will be seen, Tarleton had again routed the cavalry at Lenuds's Ferry, and Fort Moultrie, which had already been cut off, was in the hands of the enemy. But for the present the hopes were cheering, and Lincoln, on the 1st of May, congratulated his army in general orders upon the prospect of reopening their communications with the country. But an incident immediately occurred which greatly dampened the confidence of the garrison.

It became necessary to send some intelligence to Gov-

¹ Colonel Abraham Buford, Third Virginia Regiment.



ernor Rutledge, and his brother, Mr. Edward Rutledge, was selected for the purpose. About the same time Colonel Malmédy, having no command and having become unpopular in the garrison, because of his retreat from Lemprière's Point, was advised to quit the town. He and Mr. Rutledge, who had served till this time with reputation as captain in the Charlestown battalion of artillery, set out together in a boat with two others who, strange to say, it afterward appeared were suspected characters. They were captured.¹ Mr. Rutledge, unfortunately, had allowed himself, through the importunity of his friend, Mr. Benjamin Smith, to be betrayed into an act of indiscretion, which was most unhappy in its results. He had taken a letter from Mr. Smith addressed to his wife, then at her father's in North Carolina. As the roads were now everywhere beset, the communication to the Governor had been confided to Mr. Rutledge orally, and, it is said, with the strictest injunction to take no written communication from the garrison. A letter addressed by a friend to his wife, under assurance that it was only a family letter, Mr. Rutledge unwarily considered as no violation of his instructions. He was captured, as we have said, soon after he left the town, and printed copies of the letter were next day thrown into the garrison in unloaded bombshells, and most unaccountably through a secret agency dispersed through all parts of the town in printed handbills. The letter plainly told that the garrison must soon surrender, their provisions were expended, and Lincoln only prevented from capitulating by a point of etiquette. From this time hope deserted the garrison, whilst the

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 144. McIntosh tells the story of an attempted escape of Colonel Malmédy, and of his being killed, but this was a mistake. He certainly was not killed. We shall find him in command of a part of the line at Eutaw.



reanimated efforts of the enemy showed their zeal revived.¹

¹ Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 276. The following copy of this letter is found in Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 181; also in *Memoirs of the War of '76*, 152: —

“ CHARLESTOWN, April 30, 1780.

“ Having never had an opportunity of writing to her since the enemy began to act with vigor, and knowing that a thousand evil reports will prevail to increase her uneasiness — mine I have supported pretty well until last night, when I really almost sunk under the load. Nothing remains around to comfort me but a probability of saving my life. . . . After going through many difficulties, our affairs are daily declining, and not a ray of hope remains to us of success. . . . The enemy have turned the siege into a blockade, which in a short time must have the desired effect, and the most sanguine do not now entertain the smallest hope of the town being saved. The enemy have continued their approaches with vigor continually, since I wrote the inclosed, and are now completing batteries two hundred yards distance from our lines; they fire but seldom from their cannon, but their popping off rifles and small arms do frequent mischief, and every night they throw out an amazing number of shells amongst our people in the lines, which, though not attended with the damage that might reasonably be expected, do some mischief. Our communication is entirely cut off from the country (excepting by a small boat at great risque) by Lord Cornwallis, who occupies every landing place from Haddrell's Point a considerable way up the river, with two thousand five hundred men. When I wrote last it was the general opinion that we could evacuate the town at pleasure; but a considerable reënforcement having arrived to the enemy, has enabled them to strengthen their posts so effectually as to prevent that measure. The same cause prevents our receiving supplies of provisions or reënforcements, and a short time will plant the British standard on our ramparts. You will see by the inclosed summons that the persons and properties of the inhabitants will be saved; and consequently I expect to have the liberty of soon returning to you; but the army must be made prisoners of war. This will give a rude shock to the independence of America; and a Lincolnade will become as common as a Burgoyneade. But I hope we shall in time recover this severe blow. However, before this happens, I hope I shall be permitted to return home, where I will stay, as my situation will not permit me to take any further an active part; and therefore my abandoning my property will subject me to many inconveniences and losses without being in any way serviceable to the coun-



The siege progressed during the 2d and 3d of May without special incident except that the enemy threw in shells charged with rice and sugar by way of taunt to the supposed wants of the garrison. On the 4th a ration of meal was reduced to six ounces, but coffee and sugar was still allowed to the soldiers. Nothing of importance took place on the 5th and 6th; but on Sunday, the 7th, the garrison in town saw the British ensign floating from Fort Moultrie, where Jasper had planted the flag with the crescent on the 28th of June, 1776.

The British, being now in possession of Mount Pleasant at Haddrell's Point, acquired full information in regard to the state of the garrison and defences of Fort Moultrie. Upon this, and in order not to draw upon the army, which was fully occupied elsewhere, Admiral Arbuthnot landed a body of seamen and marines, under the command of Captain Hudson, to attempt the fort by storm on the west and northwest faces, while the ships of the squadron battered it in front. The garrison, under Lieutenant Colonel Scott, consisting now of but two hundred men, seeing the hopelessness of resistance and the impossibility of their escape, on the 7th of May accepted the terms of capitulation offered

try. . . . This letter will run great risque, as it will be surrounded on all sides, but I know the person to whose care it is committed, and feel for your uneasy situation I could not but trust it. Assure yourself that I shall shortly see you, as nothing prevents Lincoln's surrender but a point of honor in holding out to the last extremity. This is nearly at hand, as our provisions will soon fail; and my plan is to walk off as soon as I can obtain permission. . . . Should your father be at home, make him acquainted with the purport of the letter, and remember me to him, also to your mother; but do not let the intelligence go out of the house, . . . but a mortifying scene must be encountered. The thirteen stripes will be levelled in the dust, and I owe my life to the clemency of a conqueror.

"Your ever affectionate husband,

"B. SMITH."



them. They were allowed to march out with the usual honors of war. The officers in garrison, as well Continental as militia, with the non-commissioned officers and privates of the militia, were to be considered as prisoners of war at large on their parole, and to be allowed to reside with their families and friends anywhere but in Charlestown, while it was under siege.¹ Moultrie, in his *Memoirs*, complains that the fort was given up without firing a gun. It was natural that Moultrie should be sensitive of the fame of the fort, which had been hallowed by his glorious victory four years before. But his own battles had shown that the fort could easily be passed by a fleet which would not stop to engage it, and that when once passed it could be enfiladed with little difficulty by ships lying off the west end of the island. Still more was it plain that after Commodore Whipple's fleet had been withdrawn from defending his position, and after Colonel Pinckney, with the greater part of the garrison, had also been withdrawn into the town, there was nothing left to Colonel Scott, cut off as he was from all supplies and retreat, but to make the best terms he could when assaulted. The terms which he did obtain were better than those which Lincoln was compelled to accept for the garrison in Charlestown a few days after. There was, however, great rejoicing in the British camp at the surrender of the fort. In a journal of the operations before Charlestown a British writer records: "Fort Moultrie the Great has fallen! The morning of the 7th of May the British flag was displayed on its rampart. It surrendered to a detachment of seamen and marines commanded by Captain Hudson of the *Richmond*, without firing a gun."² The writer did not add, as he should have done, that the surrender of the little iso-

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*. 53.

² *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 127.



lated garrison was made only when all "the honors of war" were accorded to it.¹ But the British flag floating over Fort Moultrie was no doubt a great blow to the garrison in town. Its moral effect was most dispiriting. Another disaster was barely escaped on this day: a thirteen-inch shell fell within ten yards of the principal magazine of the garrison. The magazine stood near St. Philip's Church.² Fortunately, Moultrie had before removed ten thousand pounds of powder from it to the northeast corner of the Exchange, where it remained undiscovered by the British during the long period while they held the city, the precaution having been taken to brick it up.

Still another disaster, to which we have before alluded, had befallen, of which the garrison was not yet aware. The remains of Huger's cavalry, after the surprise of Monck's Corner, withdrew to the north side of the Santee for security, where Colonel White of Moylan's Regiment took the command. This officer discovering that Lord Cornwallis extended his foraging parties to the southern banks of the river, determined to interrupt the collection of his supplies. Upon the first notice of the enemy's approach he passed the Santee and struck at the foe, broke up the forage excursion, captured most of the party, with which he retired to Lenuds's Ferry, upon the Santee. There he had ordered boats to meet him, at the same time communicating the success to Lieutenant Colonel Buford, — who, with the remainder of the Virginia line, had reached that near Charlestown, and was now stationed on the north side of the river, — requiring his aid in the transportation of himself and his prisoners to the opposite shore. How it happened — says Lee in his *Memoirs* — was not

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 53.

² The building remains still to be seen in a lot on Cumberland Street, adjoining St. Philip's churchyard.



ascertained, but it did happen that neither Buford's coöperation nor the boats ordered by White were obtained in time; and Colonel White, expecting instantly the means of conveyance, waited incautiously on the southern bank of the river, instead of seeking cover.

Tarleton, who happened, on the 6th of May, to be on his march to Lenuds's Ferry with his cavalry, sent thither by the British general to procure intelligence, falling in with a Royalist, was informed of White's success, and instantly pressed forward to strike him. He came up with White's cavalry on the banks of the Santee, and repeated the rout of Monck's Corner. The knowledge of the country was a second time beneficial to the fugitives; the swamp saved some, while others swam the river. Between thirty and forty only were killed and taken;¹ but the force was again dispersed. John Lewis Gervais, however, gives another account, which explains how it happened that Colonel White was not supported. He says that the plan was for Colonel White to march from Georgetown on Thursday evening with the cavalry, and to take three hundred foot from Colonel Buford to surprise a body of the enemy which was at Wambaw, Elias Ball's plantation. The arrangement was made with Colonel Buford, and acting upon it Colonel White crossed the river, but did not meet with the infantry; on the contrary, he received a note from Colonel Buford, that he could not send them, and wishing him success. Colonel White determined nevertheless to venture near the enemy in hopes of falling in with some of their parties, and went as far as Wambaw, where he took an officer and thirteen privates, and retreated with them to Lenuds's Ferry, at which place the enemy overtook and completely routed him. Tarleton again

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 156; *Tarleton's Campaigns*, 19.



secured fifty or sixty horses, and his dragoons plundered everything within their reach.¹

On Monday, the 8th of May, Sir Henry Clinton sent in another summons to the town. He wrote to Lincoln:—

“Circumstanced as I now am with respect to the place invested humanity only can induce me to lay within your reach the terms I had determined should not again be proffered. The fall of Fort Sullivan, the destruction (on the 6th instant) of what remained of your cavalry, the critical period to which our approaches against the town have brought us, mark this as the term of your hopes of succour (could you ever have framed any), and as an hour beyond which resistance is temerity. By this last summons, therefore, I throw to your charge whatever vindictive severity exasperated soldiers may inflict on the unhappy people whom you devote by preserving in a fruitless defence. I shall expect your answer until eight o'clock, when hostilities will commence again unless the town be surrendered,” etc.²

Upon the receipt of the summons Lincoln called a council of officers, numbering sixty in all, including all the field officers of the militia and the captains of the Continental frigates.³ He did not invite Lieutenant Governor Gadsden to be present, but sent a message by Colonel Simons requesting him to submit whatever propositions he desired for the citizens.⁴ Upon the assembling of this council he laid before them Clinton's summons. It required time to obtain the opinion of so numerous a body, and to allow Gadsden to submit his requirements. Lincoln

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 152.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 86; Ramsay's *Revolution*, II, 400; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 96.

³ For the members of this council and their votes see Lincoln's papers, published in *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1807 (Smyth), 349, 357. Colonels C. C. Pinckney and Barnard Beckman, Lieutenant Colonels William Henderson, John Laurens, Samuel Hopkins, Matthew Clarkson, and Richard C. Anderson, with Captains of the Continental frigates Hacker, Rathburn, Tucker, and Simpson, eleven out of the sixty, voted against capitulation.

⁴ Johnson's *Traditions*, 260.



therefore wrote to Clinton that there were so many different interests to be consulted, he proposed that hostilities should not commence again before twelve o'clock. This was assented to. Later, Lincoln again wrote that more time had been expended in consulting the different interests than he had supposed, and requested that the time should be extended until four o'clock. This was also granted.

It will be recollected that in the former attempt at a negotiation, the British commanders had refused to go any farther than the third article proposed by Lincoln, in which he attempted to secure a provision that the troops comprising the garrison, and such of the Charlestown militia as chose to leave the place, should have thirty-six hours to withdraw to Lemprière's Point, retiring with the usual honors of war and all their arms, artillery, ammunition, baggage, and stores. Instead of this, they had referred Lincoln to their first summons, which offered only the saving of the lives and property of the inhabitants contained in the town. Lincoln now offered (3) that the Continental troops with their baggage should be conducted to a place to be agreed on, where they should remain prisoners of war until exchanged, and that while prisoners they should be supplied with good and wholesome provisions, in such quantity as were served out to the troops of his Britannic Majesty. (4) He asked that the militia and the garrison should be permitted to return to their respective homes, and be secured in their persons and properties. (5) Renewed his demand as to the care of the sick. (6) He asked that the officers of the army should be allowed to keep their horses, swords, pistols, and baggage, which should not be searched, and retain their servants. (7) That the garrison should march out with all the honors of war, as he had before asked. (8) That the



French Consul should be protected, as before demanded, and a proper time given him for retiring to any place that might be agreed upon. (9) That the citizens should be protected in their lives and property. (10) He renewed the proposition that twelve months' time should be allowed all such as did not choose to continue under the British government to dispose of their effects and remove themselves and their families, as he had before made it. (11) He asked that the same protection to their persons and properties and right of removal of their effects should be given the subjects of France and Spain as were required for the citizens. And lastly (12) he asked that a vessel should be permitted to go to Philadelphia with the General's dispatches, which were not to be opened. The demand in his former articles as to the Continental and French ships of war was not renewed.

Upon the receipt of these offers Sir Henry Clinton, at half after five P.M., asked for time that he might communicate with the Admiral upon the subject, and that an aide-de-camp might be permitted, for the purpose, to pass to his fleet, that is, down the Ashley from Gibbes's Landing. This was of course assented to; and at six o'clock P.M., in order to give the articles of capitulation due consideration, he proposed that the cessation of hostilities should continue until the next morning at eight o'clock, and that in the meantime everything should continue in its present situation. Lincoln at once acceded to this; but Sir Henry sent another letter, more explicitly declaring that his meaning was that during the time there should be no attempt made to remove any of the troops or destroy any of the ships, stores, or other effects. Lincoln assented to this also, and the garrison and town enjoyed a night of complete repose. Indeed, Moultrie says that while these flags were passing the militia looked upon all

the business as settled, and, without orders, took up their baggage and walked into town, leaving the lines quite defenceless.

The next morning, the 9th, Clinton and Arbuthnot sent in the modifications of the articles proposed by Lincoln, which they required. These principally related to the treatment of the militia and the citizens of the town. As had been doubtless required by Gadsden, Lincoln proposed that the militia should be permitted to return to their respective homes and be secured in their persons and properties; and that the citizens should be protected in their lives and their properties, and should be allowed twelve months to choose whether to continue under the British government or not. Clinton and Arbuthnot consented that the militia then in garrison should be permitted to return to their respective homes, but added the important condition, upon the observance of which, on the one side and on the other, so much afterward turned, namely, that they should be regarded *as prisoners of war upon parole, which parole, so long as they observed it, should secure them from being molested in their property by the British troops*. As to the citizens, they required that all civil officers and the citizens who had borne arms during the siege must also *be prisoners on parole*, and with respect to their property in the city should have the same terms as were granted to the militia. It was also required that all persons then in the town, not described in these articles, were to be understood to be prisoners on parole. They declined to entertain the proposition in regard to the right of citizens to choose whether they would continue British subjects. They agreed to allow the French Consul protection as to his house, papers, and property, but required that he should consider himself a prisoner on parole, the subjects of France and Spain to have the same terms as



the Consul. The officers' horses were not to go out of town, but might be disposed of by a person to be appointed for the purpose. They declined to allow the full honors of war to the garrison, but required them to march out at an hour appointed to a place designated, where they should deposit their arms. The drums were not to beat a British march, nor their colors to be uncased. They agreed to allow a vessel to go to Philadelphia, with the General's dispatches unopened, and promised to provide a vessel for the purpose. They required that all public papers and records should be carefully preserved and faithfully delivered.

Lincoln and his council were not yet ready to yield to these demands and give up the effort to obtain better terms for the militia and citizens. He wrote therefore to Clinton that in their present state the conditions proposed were inadmissible and proposed modifications, which he sent. If any further explanation should be necessary, he proposed that two or three gentlemen might be appointed to meet and confer on the subject. The points he insisted upon were (1) that the militia should not be considered as prisoners of war; (2) that such officers as were unwilling to dispose of their horses might keep them; (3) that the garrison should march out, the drums beating a British march; (4) that the French Consul, never having borne arms, but acting in a civil capacity, should not be considered as a prisoner of war; (5) that the citizens should not be considered prisoners of war; (6) that the article in regard to the right of citizens to choose, within a given time, to which government they would adhere, should be retained, giving them paroles that they would not act against the British government until they were exchanged; (7) that the article in regard to the French and Spanish subjects should stand as he had proposed;

and, finally, that in order to prevent disputes it was to be understood that all officers of the Continental army who were citizens of the State should be entitled to all the benefits of citizens with regard to the security of their property.

Clinton and Arbuthnot upon receiving these reiterated demands, which they had already refused, curtly replied that no other motives than those of forbearance and compassion induced them to renew offers of terms Lincoln had no claim to. The alterations he proposed were utterly inadmissible, and that hostilities would in consequence commence afresh at eight o'clock.¹

When that hour in the evening arrived, it found the soldiers of both armies standing to their guns; but an hour passed, both sides remaining silent, all calm and ready, each waiting for the other to begin. At length the garrison, to show their determination to stand to the terms demanded by them, fired the first gun, and then followed a tremendous cannonade. From one hundred and eighty to two hundred pieces of heavy artillery were fired at the same moment, while mortars from each side threw out an immense number of shells. It was a glorious sight, says Moultrie, to see the shells, like meteors, crossing each other and bursting in the air; it appeared as if the stars were falling to the earth. The fire was incessant almost the whole night; the cannon-balls whizzing and shells hissing continually amongst the combatants, ammunition chests and temporary magazines blowing up, great guns bursting, and wounded men groaning among the lines. It was a dreadful night; it was our last great effort, but it availed us nothing!²

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 86-96; Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 400-403; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 97-111.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 96.

Lincoln and the garrison were standing out, not only on a matter of substance and of great import, but also upon a mere point of honor. The latter, the marching out with the drums beating a British march and with colors unfurled, however gratifying to the wounded pride of the garrison, which had already agreed to surrender, was a mere matter of sentiment and ceremony, which should not be allowed to cost further bloodshed; but the former involved a question as to the condition of the militia and citizens, which was worth suffering for, and which the garrison was showing itself not unwilling to fight still longer and to die for if need be. And yet Gadsden, at whose instance the fight was being made, was not satisfied. He had not been consulted. Amidst the roar of the bombardment, at "fifty minutes after nine, May 9, 1780," he writes a letter to General Lincoln, indignant that he, the supreme magistrate of the State in town, at the head of the militia officers who had been brought into the Council, in their civil capacities, should not have been consulted at all on so momentous a matter, and much more strange still when the consultation was so general. He went on to say that as he was aware that Lincoln was determined to send proposals, he had no time to lose; he had therefore called a council as expeditiously as possible, and made up the article sent in the best manner he could. "What reason," he continued, "may have induced you to make proposals, and what they were, I know not; but my duty to my country obliges me to tell you that I had a right to be consulted on the occasion, and as I was not, I do solemnly protest against such treatment, and send you this to let you know I do so." Gadsden wrote the letter amidst all the horrors of that night; but his Council would not allow him to send it. Ferguson, amongst whose papers a copy was found, adds that the Council were

unanimous in opinion that such a letter was extremely proper; but persuaded Gadsden to delay it till the result of the capitulation should be known, lest it might kindle some resentment in Lincoln, and he might be less attentive to their interests.¹ Unfortunate Lincoln! He had given up all his own demands for his Continentals, was begging now only for his officers' horses and a point of etiquette in marching out, but was standing out manfully for Gadsden's demands for the militia and citizens. And yet Gadsden and his Council, instead of thanking him, were holding indignation meetings upon his conduct because he would not subject himself to the open affronts and defiances he had received when he had consulted them before.

The bombardment had continued all night, several houses were burnt, and many more were with difficulty saved. By this time the British had completed their third parallel. Besides the cannon and mortars which played on the garrison at a distance of less than a hundred yards, rifles were fired by the Hessian jagers with such effect that very few escaped who showed themselves above the lines. Fortunately for Lincoln, the next day the citizens themselves came to his relief. On Wednesday, the 10th, "the Petition of divers inhabitants of Charlestown, in behalf of themselves and others their Fellow Citizens," was handed to him. The petition represented that they were informed that the difficulties that arose in the negotiations of yesterday and the day preceding related wholly to the citizens, to whom the British commanders offered their estates and to admit them to their parole as prisoners of war. And understanding that it was an indisputable proposition that they could derive no advantage from a perseverance in resistance, with everything that is dear

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 261.



to them at stake, they thought it their indispensable duty in the perilous situation of affairs to request Lincoln to send out a flag in the name of the people, intimating their acquiescence in the terms proposed. This petition was presented from a great majority of the inhabitants and of the country militia.¹

On Thursday, the 11th, the British crossed the wet ditch and were within twenty-five yards of the lines of the besieged. They were prepared to strike the last blow, and the order for the assault and storm of the town remained only to be given, when a flag appeared. Lincoln had agreed to surrender.

His communication stated that the same motive of humanity which had induced Clinton and Arbuthnot to propose articles of capitulation to the garrison, had induced him to offer those he had sent on the 8th. Those he had then thought such as he might propose and Clinton and Arbuthnot might receive with honor to both parties. Their exception to them, as they principally concerned the militia and citizens, he then conceived were such as could not be concurred with; but that a recent application from these people expressing a willingness that he should comply, and a wish on his part to lessen the distresses of war to individuals, led him now to offer his acceptance of them.²

Clinton replied that when Lincoln had rejected the favorable terms, which were dictated by an earnest desire to prevent effusion of blood, and had interposed articles which were wholly inadmissible, both the Admiral and himself were of opinion that the surrender of the town

¹ Lincoln's Papers, MS.; *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1897 (Smyth), 394-408.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, 97; Ramsay's *Revolution*, III, 463; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 111.

at discretion was the only condition which should afterward be attended to; but that as the motives which had before influenced them were still prevalent, he now informed Lincoln that the terms then offered would still be granted. A copy of the articles would be sent to Lincoln as soon as prepared, and immediately after they were exchanged a detachment of grenadiers would be sent to take possession of the hornwork opposite the main gate of the town. Every arrangement which might induce to good order in occupying the town would be settled before ten o'clock to-morrow, and at that time the garrison should march out.¹

About eleven o'clock A.M., on the 12th of May, writes Moultrie, we marched out, between fifteen and sixteen hundred Continental troops, leaving five or six hundred sick and wounded in the hospitals, and piled our arms on the left of the hornwork. The officers marched the men back to the barracks, where a British guard was placed over them. The British then asked where our second division was. They were told these were all we had except the sick and wounded. They were astonished, and said we had made a gallant defence. The militia were marched out the same day and delivered up their arms at the same place. The Continental officers went into town to their quarters, where they remained a few days to collect their baggage and sign their paroles, and then were sent over to Haddrell's Point. The British do not seem to have been satisfied with the delivery of the arms by the militia, for they were ordered the next day to parade and to bring all their arms with them, — guns, swords, pistols, etc., — and those that did not comply were

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 97; Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 40; *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1897 (Smyth), 389, 393.



threatened with having the grenadiers turned in among them. This threat, says Moultrie, brought out the aged, the timid, the disaffected, and the infirm, many of whom had never appeared during the whole siege, but which swelled the number of militia prisoners to at least three times the number of men who had ever been on duty. Moultrie was very much surprised when he saw the column march out, for many of them, he says, had been excused from age and infirmities; but they would do, he observes, to enroll on a conqueror's list.

A terrible disaster occurred to the British in storing the arms they had taken. Though warned that many of them were loaded, they were carelessly put into wagons and taken to a storehouse, or magazine, in the town,¹ and though several were discharged before the explosion took place, they were still more carelessly thrown from the wagons into the storeroom, which contained about four thousand pounds of fixed ammunition. In this way fire was at last set to the powder, and the magazine exploded, blowing up the whole guard of fifty men and many others standing by; their carcasses, legs, and arms were scattered over several parts of the town. One man was dashed with such violence against the steeple of the then new Independent Church² that the marks of his body were left upon it for several days. The houses in town received a great shock, and the window shutters rattled as if they would tumble out of the frames. And though most of the militia, who were still together after delivering up their arms, went in a body to assist in extinguishing the fire, which had communicated to the neighboring house, the British,

¹ This magazine was on what is now Magazine Street, between Archdale and Mazyck streets.

² This building stood at the corner of Archdale and West streets, where the graveyard still remains.



not aware of the facts, were naturally greatly alarmed, and believed that the explosion was some device of the rebels to destroy them. All their troops were turned out under arms, and General Moultrie himself with several other men put under guard for a time. As soon, however, as General Leslie, the commandant of the troops in the town, learned of his arrest, he sent one of his aides with an apology, saying that his arrest was contrary to orders.

The loss of life and the injuries received during the siege were much less than might have been expected, in view of the fact that every part of the town was under fire, and that there was no spot in it safe from shells and cannon-balls. The circle of fire was nearly complete. On the east the town was under the guns of the fleet, on the south under the batteries on James Island, on the west under those at Wappoo and the galleys there, and on the north under the guns of the advancing forces. It was only the northeast from which came no shot or shell. And yet in all the forty-two days of the siege only twenty of the inhabitants were killed. There was but very little loss, too, in the militia and among the sailors, who were not stationed upon the lines. The Continentals and the Charlestown battalion of artillery bore the brunt of the fire, posted as they were on the lines in front of the besiegers. Eighty-nine of these were killed and 138 wounded. Among the killed were Colonel Parker, an officer who had often distinguished himself by his gallantry and good conduct, and Captain Peyton, — both of the Virginia line, — Major Gilbank, Philip Nyle, aide-de-camp to General Moultrie, Captains Thomas Moultrie, Mitchell, and Templeton. The battalion of artillery, though stationed at the hornwork, lost only three men killed, and the adjutant and seven privates



wounded. About thirty houses in the town were burnt, and many others greatly damaged.¹

The loss of the British during the siege amounted to 78 killed and 189 wounded. The loss of the garrison was thus not so great as that of the besiegers; but the number of slain was greater.²

Sir Henry Clinton first reported that the prisoners taken by him upon the capitulation made about 6000 men in arms.³ The return of prisoners as made by Major André, Deputy Adjutant General, amounted to 5684. But the return comprehended in the militia every adult freeman of the town, including the infirm, invalids, and disaffected, as described by Moultrie in the procession brought out by the British bayonets, including also 200 who issued an address of congratulation to Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot upon their success. Moultrie states that between 1500 and 1600 Continentals were marched out to surrender, leaving 500 or 600 sick and wounded in the hospitals. But in this estimate he is clearly mistaken. There were in the garrison certainly 800 South Carolina Continentals, 400 Virginians under Colonel Heth, 700 North Carolinians under General Hogan, and 750 Virginians under General Woodford = 2650.⁴ The number of officers

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 62.
² Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 186.
³ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 43.
⁴ It is impossible from the American accounts to arrive at an exact estimate of the forces in Charlestown during the siege. When it began Lincoln had in the city the South Carolina Continentals, reduced and consolidated into three regiments, which were said not to exceed (Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 46) 800
He had also a detachment of Virginia Continentals, under Colonel Heth, estimated at (*Memoirs of the War of 1776* [Lee], 145) 400
The Charlestown militia, battalion of artillery, and Simons's brigade 1000



surrendered was very great, out of all proportion to the rank and file. One major general, 6 brigadiers, 9 colonels,

	2200	
The North Carolina militia, General Lillington's Brigade (Ramsay's <i>Revolution</i> , vol. II, 52)	1000	
	<u>3200</u>	
He was reënforced on the 11th of March by Hogan, North Carolina Continental Brigade (<i>So. Ca. in the Revolution</i> [Simms], 83, 84)	700	
On the 18th Colonel Benj. Garden brought in South Carolina militia (<i>So. Ca. in the Revolution</i> [Simms], 88)	100	
Making his force	<u>4000</u>	
And this was the estimate made by John Wells, Jr., on the 24th (<i>So. Ca. in the Revolution</i> [Simms], 93). But on the 20th all Lillington's North Carolina left, except 178	822	
Which reduced Lincoln's force, but still left on the 30th of March in garrison	<u>3178</u>	
Yet in his letter to Washington, Lincoln writes that on the 30th of March "the whole number" in garrison, besides sailors, amounted to but (<i>Year Book of the City of Charles-</i> <i>ton</i> , 1897, 375)	<u>2225</u>	
It is possible that Lincoln intended by this to say that the whole number of effective men in the garrison amounted only to this number. Assuming then, as we must do, that Lincoln's actual force on the 30th of March was	3178	
We must add the reënforcements of Woodford's Virginia Brigade of Continentals, which arrived on the 4th of April, and he estimated at	750	
And small parties of South and North Carolina militia, amounting possibly to	250	1000
Making his force		<u>4178</u>
To these must be added sailors from the sunken vessels . . .		1200
Total		<u>5378</u>
Again assuming that Lincoln's force when the siege began was, as above		3200
In his letter to Washington he says that the only reënforce- ments received by him were :—		



14 lieutenant colonels, 15 majors, 84 captains, 84 lieutenants, and 32 second lieutenants and ensigns. The

Of South Carolina militia . . .	300	
Of North Carolina militia . . .	300	600
General Hogan's brigade . . .	600	
The Virginia line for the army . .	750	1350
		<u>1950</u>
<i>(Year Book of the City of Charleston, 1897, 355, 356.)</i>		
Which would make his force . . .		5150
The British return of the rebel force captured makes the number somewhat larger. They claim to have captured .		5683
An analysis of their return shows the following :—		

<i>General and Staff</i>			1970
Major General . . .	1		
Brigadier General . . .	1		
Engineers	5		
General Hospital Staff	25		
Quarter Master General Department . .	16		
Commissary General Department . . .	6	54	
<i>South Carolina Troops</i>			
General officer . . .	1		
First South Carolina Continentals . . .	231		
Second South Carolina Continentals . . .	246		
Third South Carolina Continentals . . .	259		
Fourth South Carolina Continentals (artillery)	93		
First Battalion, Charlestown militia . . .	352		
Second Battalion, Charlestown militia .	485		
Charlestown Battalion of Artillery . . .	168		
Pulaski's Light Dragoons	41		
Citizens in ranks . .	40	1916	
<i>North Carolina Troops</i>			
General officer . . .	1		
First North Carolina Continentals . . .	287		
Second North Carolina Continentals . . .	301		
Third North Carolina Continentals . . .	162		
Artillery, North Carolina Continentals .	64	815	
<i>North and South Carolina militia</i> . . .			
		<u>1231</u>	
		4016	
<i>Virginia Troops</i>			
General officers . . .	2		
First Virginia Continentals	336		
Second Virginia Continentals	306		
Third Virginia Continentals	252		
First Virginia Detachment	258		
Second Virginia Detachment	232		
		<u>1386</u>	



commanders of the militia from the country, men of the first rank, influenced by a sense of honor, repaired to the defence of the town, though they could not bring with them a number of men equal to their respective

	1386	4016		5449
Fourth Virginia Continental officers . . .	6		<i>Miscellaneous</i>	
Fifth Virginia Continental officers . . .	6		Cannoneers (these were, it is believed, South Carolina militia, but they are not otherwise designated) . .	167
Sixth Virginia Continental officers . . .	10		French company . . .	43
Seventh Virginia Continental officers . . .	6		Georgia officers . . .	6
Eighth Virginia Continental officers . . .	4		Troops surrendered . .	5665
Tenth Virginia Continental officers . . .	9		Civil officers . . .	18
Eleventh Virginia Continental officers . . .	6	1433	Total	<u>5683</u>
		<u>5449</u>		

Mr. Sabine makes the extraordinary statement upon evidence which he says he has examined that "South Carolina with a *Northern army to assist her* could not, or would not, even preserve her own capital" (*The Am. Loyalists*, 30, 32). Besides General Lincoln, his aides, Major Clarkson (Massachusetts) and Colonel Anthony Walton White, who was so unsuccessful in his career in the South, there was not another Northern soldier at the siege of Charlestown so far as we are aware. There were no troops from any other States but Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. The troops spoken of as coming "from the northward" were those from North Carolina and Virginia, those States being north of South Carolina. There were several excellent bodies of Northern troops who fought in South Carolina during the Revolution, as will hereafter appear, *but they all fought on the British side*. They were Tory provincials. They were as follows: Tarleton's, or the British Legion, raised in New York; the King's Third American Regiment, or New York Volunteers (Turnbull's); the King's Fourth American Regiment, New York; Ferguson's American Volunteers, New York; Lord Rawdon's Volunteers of Ireland, raised in Pennsylvania; the First Battalion, New York Loyalists, Lieutenant Colonel Cruger; the Second Battalion of same, Lieutenant Colonel Allen.



commands. The Continental regiments were completely officered, though the number of privates was very small. This was particularly the case with the Virginia regiments, in several of which there were no enlisted men, only commissioned officers. The supernumerary regular officers without command were retained in the garrison from an apprehension that if they were ordered out it would dispirit the army, and from an expectation, confidently indulged in the early days of the siege, that their services would be wanted to command the expected large reinforcements of militia.¹ In addition to the loss of the army, the Americans also lost, in prisoners, about 1000 sailors, including the French, 157 guns in the batteries, and about 50,000 pounds of powder.²

Moultrie tells of a conversation with a British officer, who was receiving from him the returns of the artillery stores, in which the officer said, "Sir, you have made a gallant defence, but you had a great many rascals among you" (and mentioned their names) "who came out every night and gave us information of what was passing in your garrison."³ This incident is more remarkable for the want of vigilance and discipline in the garrison which it illustrates, than for the fact that there were those in the town who would give such information. For it must be remembered that the besieged town contained many people who were opposed to the whole war; many who regarded their fellow-citizens who had brought it on as rebels, just as the British did; many who had never, in heart at least, renounced allegiance to his Majesty, had never recognized the stars and stripes as their flag, but still looked upon the British standard as their own; and many others who, having gone into the Revolution to resist oppression and

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 61.

² Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 106-107.

³ *Ibid.*, 108.

maintain the right of representation, had considered the end gained when Lord North proposed his conciliatory measures. To both of these classes the Declaration of Independence and the war for its maintenance was the treason — not the opposition to Congress. And yet during the whole siege only twenty soldiers — regulars and militia — deserted to the British;¹ while, still more remarkable, several deserters came into the besieged town, with its inevitable fall before them, and brought their information of what was going on in the British camp.²

Ramsay, the historian, says that much censure was undeservedly cast on General Lincoln for risking his army within the lines, and undertakes a defence of his conduct in doing so. This is the least Ramsay should do, for he was one of those who were largely responsible for Lincoln's course; he was one of Gadsden's Council who dictated to Lincoln throughout the siege what should be done, and who threatened mutiny if he attempted to abandon the town. But it is clear that all of Lincoln's officers, excepting Colonel C. C. Pinckney, and, in some degree, General Moultrie, were opposed to standing a siege. The engineer officers advised against its practicability, and General McIntosh, one of the bravest and ablest of the general officers in the garrison, was from the time of his entering it open in his advice to evacuate the town. Washington, as we have seen, was of opinion that when Lincoln decided to abandon the bar he should likewise have abandoned the town. It was the opposition of Gadsden and his Council, including Dr. Ramsay, which alone prevented Lincoln's attempt to save his army. Lincoln, in his letter to Washington, states that the first reason

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 61.

² *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 80, 107, 108, 111; Moultrie, vol. II, 66.



assigned by the council of his officers on the 21st of April against the attempt to evacuate was that the civil authorities would not allow it. Herein was Lincoln's greatest weakness: that from the first he subordinated his military policy to the opinions and wishes of civilians; and in doing so he lost not only their confidence, but their respect, and incurred insult and defiance.

Nor did Gadsden possess any authority to which he should have listened. He was not left in the garrison to exercise authority. The constitution of the State allowed the Lieutenant Governor to succeed to the office of Governor only in the absence of the Governor from the State.¹ Governor Rutledge was not absent from the State, and there could not be two Governors at the same time. He was not therefore the supreme magistrate of the State in the town as he claimed, nor was he at the head of the militia officers in their civil capacities or in any other. He was left in the town to encourage the people, "more to satisfy the citizens than because of the propriety of the measure;"² not to interfere with the military authorities. The General Assembly upon the eve of adjournment had delegated power to *Governor John Rutledge*, and such of his Council as he could conveniently consult, to do everything that was necessary; but that was a personal trust, they had not given the power to the Lieutenant Governor in his absence. While Rutledge was alive and in the State Gadsden was without any authority whatsoever. The mere fact that he was separated from the Governor by the siege could not invest him with power to act in his place. The fact of the siege placed the government absolutely in the hands of the military. South Carolina had joined the confederacy and had submitted her army to the

¹ Article VIII. *Statutes of So. Ca.*, vol. I, 138.

² John Lewis Gervais, *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 121.

command of Continental officers appointed by Congress. The necessities and rules of war make the military commandant absolute in a state of siege; and with the conduct of General Lincoln and his council Gadsden and his associates should never have been allowed to interfere.

Lincoln should not in the first instance have drawn his army within the town; and when his officers advised him to evacuate it, he should have arrested Gadsden and his Council for their threatened opposition, and made the effort to save the troops under his command.

Great was the rejoicing in England over the fall of Charlestown. The King was out riding on horseback when the joyful tidings were brought to him by the Earl of Lincoln, Sir Henry Clinton's aide, whom he had dispatched with the news. The whole troops of the line, consisting of four thousand men, were drawn up in Hyde Park and fired a *feu de joie*, accompanied by a triple discharge of artillery. The Foot Guards observed the same ceremony in St. James's Park, and twenty-one field-pieces were fired opposite the Horse Guards; and all the troops were reviewed. Dublin was illuminated and the friends of America in that city and in Paris were greatly depressed.¹

¹ Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, Oct. 4, 1780; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 206, 209.



CHAPTER XXIV

1780

UPON the capture of Charlestown Sir Henry Clinton at once advanced Lord Cornwallis¹ into the interior with a part of the army, which was to remain under his command

¹ Lord Cornwallis, whose prominent career in the South now began, was of a very ancient and honorable family, and seems to have been intended from his earliest youth for the army. We find him in 1758, when only twenty years of age, captain of a light company, under the title of Lord Broome. Three years after he accompanied the Marquis of Granby to the Continent as aide-de-camp, and under the most skilful generals of the time acquired the rudiments of the art of war. In 1761 he obtained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel of the Twelfth Regiment, and was a member of Parliament. On the death of his father in 1762 he vacated his seat in the House of Commons and appeared in the House of Peers, under the title of Earl of Cornwallis. In 1765 he became one of the Lords of the Bedchamber, an *aide-de-camp to his Majesty* with the rank of colonel. His political conduct was nevertheless marked by its independence; he supported the rights of the colonists in the struggle over the Stamp Act, and opposed the government in the Wilkes controversy. Lord Mansfield is said to have rallied the venerable Earl Camden on one occasion by an allusion to Lord Cornwallis's youth: "Poor Camden, could you get only four boys to support you?" In 1766 he obtained the colonelcy of the Thirty-third Regiment of Foot. Notwithstanding his political views, he came to America with Sir William Howe, with the rank of Major General, and as we have seen took part under Sir Henry Clinton in the expedition against Charlestown, in June, 1776, and had since served in the campaigns in the Jerseys and Pennsylvania, commanding a considerable part of the army at Brandywine. He was about now to enter upon a distinguished career, which was to end at Yorktown. After the Revolution he became Governor General of India, and subsequently viceroy of Ireland, where he was engaged in a second business of putting down a rebellion, in which he was more successful than he had been in the first. — *British Military Library*, vol. I, 41–46.

for the security and extension of the conquest of the State and for further ultimate operations. Sir Henry had received information that a French armament with transports and troops might be expected on the coast of America to coöperate with General Washington, and he was anxious to return at once to New York lest if he delayed he might be intercepted on his way. He busied himself therefore in establishing civil regulations for further securing the British interests in South Carolina, while he directed Lord Cornwallis to capture Governor Rutledge and his Council if possible, to clear the State of the few remaining hostile troops, to overawe the inhabitants, and to establish military posts on the frontier.

On the 18th of May Lord Cornwallis left his ground in Christ Church Parish, and with upward of twenty-five hundred men marched to Lenuds's Ferry, where he crossed the Santee on his way to Camden. Two other divisions, after leaving Charlestown and reaching Dorchester, separated; the first, under Lieutenant Colonel Brown, moved up the Savannah to Augusta, while the second, under Lieutenant Colonel Balfour, passed along the Congaree to Ninety-Six. Neither of these parties encountered the slightest resistance. Augusta, Ninety-Six, and Camden were soon possessed, fortified, and garrisoned.

Cornwallis was somewhat delayed in crossing the Santee, the Carolinians having concealed or destroyed all the boats within their reach to retard his progress. But here again information was derived from the negroes, who discovered where some were secreted, and his light troops were not long in crossing. As soon as the British legion and a detachment of dragoons had passed, Colonel Tarleton received instructions to march to Georgetown to disperse the opponents of the British government there, and to receive the allegiance of the well affected. This, during

the passage of the other troops across the river, Tarleton performed without opposition. On the 22d Cornwallis moved his army upon the same road by which Colonel Buford had retreated a few days before; that is, along the eastern bank of the Santee to Nelson's Ferry. From this point Cornwallis detached Tarleton, with a corps consisting of 40 of the Seventeenth Dragoons, 130 of the legion, and 100 mounted infantry, to pursue Buford's party, who were now so far advanced as to be beyond the reach of his main body. The detachment left the army on the 27th and followed the Americans with great rapidity, losing, however, in doing so, a number of horses, disabled by the exertion and the heat. On the march Tarleton came very near capturing Governor Rutledge, together with Daniel Huger and John L. Gervais, the two of his Council who accompanied him. These gentlemen, entirely off their guard, were being hospitably entertained at Clermont¹ by Colonel Rugeley, an Englishman professedly opposed to the American cause, but who, true to his guests, at midnight awoke them, advising them of Tarleton's approach, and with some difficulty persuaded them to escape. At daylight Tarleton arrived at Clermont, but his prey had flown.²

General Caswell, with about 700 North Carolina militia, had joined Buford, who had with him a regiment of 350 Continentals and a small party of Washington's horse, and who was then on his march from the Santee to Camden. At Camden the two corps unfortunately separated. Caswell turned off to the Pedee, while Buford pursued the road leading to Salisbury, North Carolina. Tarleton, neglecting Caswell and his militia, pursued Buford and his Virginians. By pressing horses found on the road in the place of those he lost from the heat, he arrived the

¹ Now Stateburg.

² James's *Life of Marion*, 38.

next day at Camden, where he learned that Buford had quitted Rugeley's Mill — some fifteen miles above Camden — and that he was marching with great speed to join reënforcements then upon the road from Salisbury to Charlotte, North Carolina. Tarleton rested here but a few hours, and, with the vigor and celerity for which he was so remarkable, was soon on the road again. Starting at two o'clock on the morning of the 29th, he reached Rugeley's by daylight, where he learned that the Continentals were about twenty miles in front in the Catawba settlement. From Rugeley's Mill he sent in advance an officer with a summons to Colonel Buford to surrender. This, he admits in his memoirs, was a stratagem to delay Buford's march,¹ and that in the summons he magnified the number of his men to intimidate Buford, or at least delay him whilst he deliberated on an answer. Tarleton had with him, as we have seen, 270 men in all; and Cornwallis was far away, somewhere between Nelson's Ferry and Clermont. In his summons he represented that resistance was in vain, as Buford was then almost encompassed by a corps of 700 light troops on horseback, half of which were infantry with artillery, the rest cavalry, and that Lord Cornwallis was within a short march with nine British battalions.² His summons offered the terms granted the garrison in Charlestown. No exception can be taken to any stratagem nor to any exaggeration or misrepresentation to the enemy of one's strength. By all the ethics of war Tarleton was justified in the use of both, and we do not now dwell upon the statements of this summons to criticise his conduct in resorting to such measures. But when he himself declares that the summons was a mere stratagem to delay Buford, he should not

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 28.

² *Ibid.*, note L to Chapter I, 77.



set up its refusal as a justification or palliation of the inhuman butchery which followed. He did not expect Buford to surrender as demanded; but he anticipated that it would delay him until he could get up with the body of his command.

After a march of 154 miles in 54 hours Tarleton came up with Buford in the Waxhaws in what is now Lancaster County, near the North Carolina line, and not far distant from the Waxhaw Church, at about three o'clock in the afternoon.¹ There is a material difference between the English and American accounts of what then happened. Tarleton represents that his advance guard overtook and charged a sergeant and four of Buford's cavalry in rear of their infantry and took them prisoners; and that this, happening under the eyes of the two commanders, they respectively prepared their troops for action; that he, having made his arrangement with greater promptness, commenced the battle by a charge of his cavalry, which was fully expected by Buford, whom he heard command his men to retain their fire until the British cavalry were nearer.² On the other hand, Chief Justice Marshall, who was well acquainted with Buford and is supposed to have received his account from Buford himself, in his *Life of Washington* states that Tarleton continued to make his dispositions for the assault while flags were passing, and that the instant the truce was over his cavalry made a furious charge on the Americans, who had received no order to engage, and who were uncertain whether to defend themselves or not. That in this state of dismay some threw down their arms and begged for quarter, while others fired on their assailants.³ In an appendix to James's *Life of Marion* there is an account given by Dr.

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 32.

² *Ibid.*, 29-30.

³ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 159-160.

Robert Brownfield, an eye-witness, which, as that author says, throws more light upon the affair than anything previously written.¹

By this account it appears that when Buford received the summons he laid it before a council of his officers with three distinct alternatives from himself: Shall we comply with Tarleton's summons? Shall we abandon the baggage and, by a rapid movement, save ourselves? Or shall we fortify ourselves by the wagons and wait his approach? The first and second were decidedly rejected by the unanimous voice of the council, declaring it to be incompatible with their honor as soldiers or the duty they owed their country either to surrender or abandon their baggage on the bare statement of Tarleton as to his numbers. The third was also negatived on the ground that, although they might by this means defend themselves against Tarleton and his party, he might, in turn, obtain reënforcements from Cornwallis, against which no effectual resistance could be made. It was determined therefore to continue the march, maintaining the best possible order for the reception of the enemy, hoping to reach Lieutenant Colonel Potterfield, who had marched from Virginia in the latter end of April with a corps of horse, foot, and artillery amounting to four hundred men, and who was then approaching the South Carolina line.

In a short time Tarleton's bugle was heard, and a furious attack was made on the rear-guard, commanded by Lieutenant Pearson. Not a man escaped. Pearson was inhumanly mangled as he lay on his back. His nose and lip were bisected obliquely and the lower jaw completely divided. This it will be observed was a repetition of the dastardly conduct of this same corps at Monck's Corner, when they likewise mutilated Major Vernier after his surrender.

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 39, 183.



Buford appears to have been convinced, by this attack, of the truth of Tarleton's declaration as to his numbers. He, however, prepared for action, but upon ground offering no impediment to the enemy's cavalry. Tarleton made his arrangement for the attack with all possible expedition. His right wing, composed of sixty dragoons and nearly as many mounted infantry, — the latter, however, now dismounted, — was under the command of Major Cochrane of the legion. Captains Corbet and Kinloch, with the Seventeenth Dragoons and part of the legion, were to charge the centre of the Americans whilst Tarleton, with thirty chosen horse and some infantry, assaulted their right flank and reserve.¹ These dispositions having been made without any fire from Buford, the cavalry advanced to the charge. Tarleton states that when within forty paces of the Continental line their infantry presented their pieces, but that he heard their officers command them to retain their fire till the British cavalry were nearer; which they did until his dragoons were within ten paces. This forbearance, as he terms it, Tarleton observes, was a mistake, as it prevented his dragoons falling into confusion on the charge, and likewise deprived the Americans of the use of their ammunition. Some of his officers, men, and horses, however, suffered by their fire; but Buford's troops were totally broken, and slaughter was commenced before he could remount another horse, his own having been overturned by the volley. Thus, he adds, in a few minutes terminated an affair which might have had a very different result.

On the other hand, from the American account, it appears that the British attack was received with firmness and completely checked until the cavalry were gaining the rear, when Buford, considering further resistance

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 29.



hopeless, ordered a flag to be hoisted and the arms to be grounded, expecting the usual treatment sanctioned by civilized war. This, however, observes Brownfield, from whom we quote, formed no part of Tarleton's creed. His excuse for the relentless barbarity that ensued was that his horse, having been killed under him just as the flag was raised, his men supposed that he had been slain, and that in the moment of excitement and revenge they committed the slaughter.¹ He affected to believe that the fire in which his horse was killed was opened after the flag was raised, and imputed it to treachery on the part of Buford; but in reality, says Brownfield, he availed himself of a safe opportunity to gratify that thirst for blood which marked his character in every conjuncture that promised probable impunity to himself. Ensign Cruit, who advanced with the flag, was instantly cut down. Considering this as an earnest of what they were to expect, a resumption of their arms was attempted by the Americans, that they might sell their lives as dearly as possible; but before this was fully effected Tarleton was in the midst of them, when commenced a scene of indiscriminate carnage never surpassed by the ruthless atrocities of the most barbarous savages. The demand for quarter seldom refused to a vanquished foe was at once found to be in vain, — not a man was spared; it was the concurrent testimony of all survivors, that for fifteen minutes after every man was prostrate the British went over the ground plunging their bayonets into all that exhibited any signs of life, and in some instances, where several had fallen one over the other, these monsters were seen to throw off on the point of the bayonet the uppermost, to come at those beneath. An instance of the atrocity of the massacre is given in the case of Captain John Stokes, a native of Pittsylvania

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 30.



County, Virginia. Early in the sanguinary conflict he was attacked by a dragoon, who aimed deadly blows at his head, all of which, by the dexterous use of the small sword, he easily parried; when another on the right by one stroke cut off his right hand. He was then assailed by them both, and instinctively attempting to defend his head with his left arm, that was hacked in eight or ten places from the wrist to the shoulder and a finger cut off. His head was laid open almost the whole length of the crown to the eyebrows, and after he fell he received several cuts on the face and shoulders. A soldier, passing on in the work of death, asked if he expected quarter. Stokes answered, "I have not, nor do I mean to ask it; finish me as soon as possible;" whereupon the soldier transfixed him twice with his bayonet. Another asked the same question and received the same answer; and he also thrust his bayonet twice through his body. Strange to say, Captain Stokes lived through all these wounds, survived the war, and upon the adoption of the Constitution of the United States was rewarded by a seat on the Federal Bench.

Tarleton reported 113 killed outright, 150 so badly wounded as to be paroled on the ground, and 53 prisoners capable of moving. The British whole loss was 5 killed and 14 wounded. The American wounded were taken to the Waxhaw Church, where they were tenderly cared for by the people in the neighborhood who had the courage to remain.¹ Most of these wounded died.² This barbarous massacre gave a more sanguinary turn to the war:

¹ Howe's *Hist. Presbyterian Church in So. Ca.*, 530. Among those who ministered to these wounded and dying soldiers was Esther Gaston, then about eighteen years of age, who repaired to Waxhaw Church with her married sister Martha, and busied herself day and night ministering to their comfort. After the battle of Hanging Rock she was found there again. Note to Howe's *Hist. Presbyterian Church in So. Ca.*, 537.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 105.

"Tarleton's quarter" became proverbial. The tragedy sank deep into the hearts, not only of the American soldiers, but of the people of this section who had hitherto had but little to do with the war. It was an event which contributed much to arousing them from an indifference to the contest to the most determined resistance to the British. Tarleton himself recognized the necessity of some explanation of the extraordinary slaughter, and, as is seen, attempted to excuse it because his men supposed him to have fallen. Lord Cornwallis found no fault with the barbarous conduct of his lieutenant; and Sir Henry Clinton reported it with exultation and even with exaggeration as to the number slain.¹

But the brutal conduct of Tarleton's dragoons at Monck's Corner and the massacre at the Waxhaws were not the only instances of their cruelty in this campaign; another, which made a deep and lasting impression on the people of this section, was the killing during this expedition of Samuel Wyley, the brother of the sheriff at Camden. This unfortunate man was mistaken for his brother, John Wyley, the sheriff, whom Tarleton had determined to put to death. To perform the deed he dispatched a favorite sergeant, whose name was Hutt, with a sergeant's guard. Going to Wyley's house, two men were left concealed behind the two large gateposts at the entrance of the yard, while Hutt with the rest of the party broke into the house. Hutt demanded Wyley's shoebuckles, and while the defenceless man stooped down to unbuckle them Hutt aimed a stroke at his head. Wyley, seeing the gleam of the sword, parried the blow from his head by his hand, with the loss of some of the fingers; then, springing out of the door, he ran for the

¹ Sir Henry Clinton reported to Lord George Germain that the number slain was 172. Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 80.



gate, where the two concealed men dispatched him.¹ On this expedition, also, the British burned the house of Sumter, near Clermont, and in doing so roused the spirit of a lion.

Tarleton, after Buford's defeat, fell back to join the main army. Cornwallis had not moved more than forty miles from Nelson's Ferry when the first express arrived with the news of Tarleton's success. A few days afterward Cornwallis reached Camden, and Tarleton joined him there.² Upon the approach of the British the inhabitants of Camden met them with a flag and asked for, and were granted, terms similar to those granted to the inhabitants of Charlestown, that is, that they were to be considered as prisoners on parole.³

The people of Ninety-Six, learning that the British were advancing to that part of the State also, sent out a flag to the commanding officer, from whom they learned that Sir Henry Clinton had delegated full powers to Captain Richard Pearis, and were advised to treat with him. Articles of capitulation were immediately proposed and soon ratified, by which they were promised the same security for their persons and property which British subjects enjoyed. They submitted under the supposition that they were to be either neutrals or prisoners on parole, as had been stipulated at Charlestown.⁴ The inhabitants in the neighborhood of Beaufort likewise were assured the same terms.⁵

It will be recollected that President Lowndes, just before the inauguration of the new government under the

¹ The cause of offence was said to have been that John Wyley as sheriff had superintended the execution of some men under the statute at the time against treason. James's *Life of Marion*, 40 and note.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 82.

³ Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 111.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

constitution of 1778, when he was superseded by John Rutledge as Governor, had appointed three brigadier generals of militia, viz. Richard Richardson, Andrew Williamson, and Stephen Bull; and it will be remembered that each of these had taken a conspicuous part in the early revolutionary movement. Richardson had conducted, with great ability and energy, the famous Snow Campaign in 1775, though he was then over seventy years of age; and the next year, immediately after the victory of Fort Moultrie, Williamson had equally distinguished himself in his campaign against the Indians, in which he so amply avenged the massacre of the Hamptons. Bull had been among the first to take the field and had gone with alacrity to the assistance of the Georgians in 1776. Much was therefore expected of these officers upon the invasion of the State; but no one of them added to his reputation in the campaigns which followed. Bull's militia district was soon in the possession of the British, and we do not find him mentioned after Prévost's invasion in May, 1779. Colonel Laurens wrote, in February, 1780, that General Richardson and Colonel Kershaw were raising the militia at Camden,¹ and Dr. Johnson mentions that he was made a prisoner in the capitulation of Charleston,² but he was probably not there. His name does not occur during the siege, nor is he mentioned among the prisoners; and Gervais, who was one of the Council with Governor Rutledge, in a letter dated 28th of April (1780), speaks of collecting the militia "from Pee Dee and Richardson's former brigade — for he resigned long ago."³ He had no doubt resigned because of his infirmities; he was now more than seventy-five years of age, and was soon to die from the effects of a cruel imprisonment because he

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 34; *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 48.

² *Traditions*, 161.

³ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 137.



would not accept the terms proposed to him by the conqueror.

There hangs a heavy cloud over Williamson's conduct at this time — a cloud which overshadows not only his present, but his past career. Indeed, by many historians he has been called the Benedict Arnold of South Carolina. This probably is unjust, but his character is involved in a mystery from which it was never cleared. Whether entertained at the time or an afterthought suggested by his subsequent conduct, suspicions in regard to him are now dated back to Prévost's invasion. Williamson, as we have seen, had then been ordered to invade the southern part of Georgia while Lincoln marched directly down upon Savannah, in the hope of thus forcing Prévost to abandon his invasion of South Carolina. But when at length Lincoln was forced to realize that Prévost's movement was a real invasion and not a mere feint, he recalled Williamson. With somewhat of his old energy Williamson had, in the meanwhile, proceeded upon his expedition, had crossed the Ogeechee and cut a new road for his command, which has ever since been known as the Rebel Road. It is said, however, that Williamson did not with promptness obey Lincoln's recall, that he did not make his appearance as soon as was expected, and that his absence prevented Lincoln's attack upon Prévost when before Charlestown.¹ But it is not just to make Williamson the scapegoat for Lincoln on this occasion. Lincoln himself did not, as far as we are aware, attempt to put the blame of his delay upon Williamson. Indeed, in his letter of May 10 (1779) to Moultrie there is no complaint of any one. He writes that his men are in full spirits and will do honor to themselves; and on the 12th of May, the day of Moultrie's direst necessity, Lincoln writes that he

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 147.

was in camp on the Edisto.¹ Lincoln's dilatoriness and want of energy, whereby he nearly lost the town a year before he eventually did, should not be put to Williamson's account. Williamson was certainly at Stono and at the siege of Savannah; but while in neither of these actions did he distinguish himself, his conduct was not criticised by any one associated with him at the time. It is true that he did not come to the aid of Charlestown in 1780; and it is equally true that, had he exercised the capacity, vigor, and courage he had exhibited in his Cherokee expedition, he might have inflicted great loss upon the British outposts while they were investing the city. Had he been with Washington at Rantowle's he might have added greatly to that success; or had he been with Huger at Monck's Corner, or with White at Lenuds's Ferry, both of those disasters might have been prevented. On the other hand, it must be observed he was not altogether idle, for strange to say he was then repeating Lincoln's own course the year before. Instead of coming himself or sending Pickens, who was under his command, against the British at Charlestown, he sends Pickens into Georgia to assist Colonel Twiggs in raiding upon the British at Savannah.² It is not improbable that the dread of the smallpox, which still prevailed on the coast, had something to do with this conduct on the part of Williamson, for it was this fear, as we have seen, which in a measure at least prevented Governor Rutledge from obtaining the militia he had expected for the defence of the town. But however that may be, just before the fall of Charlestown there had been another attempt to concentrate a force of the militia of the upper part of South Carolina and Georgia to make a diversion upon the outer posts of the enemy near Savannah,

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 438.

² McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, vol. II, 296.



with a view to draw away a part of the British force before Charlestown; but at the end of fifteen days there were not more than two hundred men from Carolina and but a few from Georgia collected, then came the news of the fall of Charlestown, and the enterprise was given up. A council of officers was called to meet near Augusta, Georgia, to determine what should be done. Captain Samuel Hammond, recently from Virginia, an officer who bore a faithful and prominent part throughout the Revolution, was present at this council, and has left an account of what transpired which is important not only to the reputation of Williamson, but as indicating the condition of public opinion at the time in that part of the State.

There were present at this council Governor Howley of Georgia, his Secretary of State and Council, with Colonels Clarke, Clary, and Dooly, and several other Continental and militia officers from that State, and General Williamson and suite with a number of field officers. Williamson presented a copy of the articles of capitulation at Charlestown, which was read; and various plans were proposed and discussed, but none finally resolved upon. Howley and his Council thereupon determined to fly to the North with such of the State papers as could be conveniently carried with them. Williamson decided to discharge the few of his militia then on duty, to retire to his own place, Whitehall, near Cambridge, to call together the field officers of the brigade and the most influential citizens to consult what course should be taken. Colonels Dooly and Clarke promised Williamson to coöperate with him in any plan that should be adopted by the council at Whitehall, either in defence of the lower parts of the two States or to retire with him toward North Carolina.

Williamson went at once to Whitehall and assembled there a large number of officers; and high hopes were

entertained by Captain Hammond before going into the council that the determination would be to move into North Carolina, without loss of time, with all the force collected and all who chose to follow, to join the expected army coming to the South. Williamson had under his command three independent companies of regular infantry raised by Carolina, the officers of which were good and the troops well disciplined. There were also present one hundred and fifty to two hundred unorganized men from different parts of the State. Colonel Andrew Pickens, then on his march for the lower country, was halted about three miles below Ninety-Six, and with this force Captain Hammond thought a movement into North Carolina would have been made safely, as the enemy had no force near them except the disaffected under Pearis, who were neither equal to them in numbers or discipline.

The council met; the terms of capitulation in Charlestown were read; the General commented upon them, took a short view of the situation of the country, and concluded by advising an immediate movement, but said he would be governed by any determination a majority of the council should adopt; that they were friends and well informed that their families and his must be equally exposed or protected by any course that might be adopted. Captain Hammond says that he was struck dumb on finding not more than one officer of the staff, one field officer, and about four or five captains to oppose an immediate acceptance of the terms stipulated for the militia of the State upon the capitulation of Charlestown. It was then proposed and carried that a flag should be sent to Pearis to notify him of their determination and to settle the place and manner of surrender.

Williamson did not however even yet give in. He persevered, as Hammond says, to induce his people to con-



tinue the struggle. Colonel Pickens was not of the council, but encamped a few miles off. Williamson again addressed the council urging a different determination, and induced a number of officers to accompany him to Pickens's camp that he might advise with Pickens and address the citizens under his command. Arrived there, Williamson had a short consultation with Pickens, and then addressed his troops drawn up in a square—all mounted. His address is said to have been spirited. He told them that with his command alone he could drive all the British forces in their district before him. The articles of capitulation at Charlestown were then again read, and he again addressed the troops. He told them there was nothing in the way of a safe retreat to North Carolina; and that he had no doubt that they would soon be able to return in such force as to keep the enemy at least confined to Charlestown. He reminded them of what they had already done and urged them to persevere; but left it to themselves to say what they would do, and that he would go or stay as they should resolve. A short pause then took place, when Williamson called to them, saying: "My fellow-citizens, all of you who are for going with me on a retreat, with arms in your hands, will hold up your hands, and all who are for staying and accepting the terms made for you by General Lincoln will stand as you are." Two officers with three or four privates held up their hands; all the rest stood as they were. The question was again put, and the result was the same.¹

It is manifest from this account that Williamson up to this time was true to the cause with which he had been prominently connected from its commencement. Indeed, it appears that he was more steadfast to it than Pickens, for Pickens was not one of those who held up their hands

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 149-152.

to follow him in an effort to force their way to their friends in North Carolina. Nor indeed does Captain Hammond, who was present at these conferences, blame Williamson for his conduct, nor did the people living in his neighborhood ever join in the cry against him of treason. The truth was that the people of Ninety-Six, who had never taken an active or an enthusiastic part in the Revolution, refused to go on in the face of disaster with a movement they had not generally or cordially espoused, and were ready to accept the terms offered at Charlestown. If Williamson is at this time to be condemned, for acquiescing in the decision of his people against his urgent advice, still more so must Pickens, who refused to join in his earnest appeals to them not to submit. Nor did their courses immediately separate here. Pickens remained for six months, and those of the most stirring times and events, as quietly at home as did Williamson. Ultimately Williamson went to Charlestown, was taken under the special protection of the British, and in some way was employed by them. Pickens joined the Americans,¹ and, as Johnson, in his *Life of Greene*, observes, fought literally with a halter around his neck. The story of these two men is not a mere episode in this history. It illustrates the struggle which was going on in the minds and hearts of the people generally throughout the State.

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 153. Captain Hammond refused to abide by the decision of the council and with a small party of seventy made his way to North Carolina, and later became a Colonel in Pickens's command.



CHAPTER XXV

1780

ON the 4th of June, 1780, Sir Henry Clinton wrote from the Brewton mansion, his headquarters in Charleston, to Lord George Germain, Secretary of State in England, "I may venture to assert that there are few men in South Carolina who are not either our prisoners or in arms with us."¹ And this was undoubtedly true. There was not a Continental officer or soldier in the field. Lieutenant Colonel Francis Marion and Major Thomas Pinckney had been sent out of the garrison before the surrender and had escaped into North Carolina, and so had also General Isaac Huger, who had not been in the town and so was not among the prisoners. All the rest of the South Carolina Continental officers, including General William Moultrie, Colonel C. C. Pinckney, and Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, were prisoners at Haddrell's Point, and the Continental soldiers on prison ships in the harbor. The militia were disbanded. General Richardson had resigned before the siege, Williamson, Pickens, and Kershaw had surrendered on parole, and Bull had retired from the field. Governor Rutledge had escaped into North Carolina. Charles Pinckney and Daniel Huger, members of the Council who had left the town with Governor Rutledge, had come in and given their paroles. John Lewis Gervais, the other member of the Council who had gone out with them, was at Williams-

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*.

burg, Virginia.¹ Gadsden and his party of the Council, Ferguson, Hutson, Cattell, and Dr. Ramsay, with Edward Rutledge, Arthur Middleton, and Thomas Heyward, Jr., the three surviving signers of the Declaration of Independence, and all other prominent men of the Low Country in rebellion, were prisoners of war in Charlestown. Death, too, had been very busy in the ranks of the original movers in the Revolution. Thomas Lynch had died in December, 1776, and his son, Thomas Lynch, Jr., the fourth signer of the Declaration of Independence, was lost at sea in 1779. The Rev. William Tennent had not long survived his efforts for civil and ecclesiastical freedom. He had died of a nervous fever on the 11th of August, 1777. Miles Brewton, one of the original Council of Safety of 1775, had left the country, as it will be remembered, in 1775, and had also perished at sea. William Henry Drayton, too, was dead. He had died in Philadelphia, while there as a member of Congress, in September, 1779.² In this year, also, had died James Parsons,

¹ *Hist. of the Old Cherokees* (Gregg), 321.

² Early in 1778 Mr. Drayton was elected by the General Assembly of South Carolina a delegate to the Continental Congress, to which he repaired at Yorktown in Pennsylvania in the latter part of March. He there took an active part against the conciliatory measures of Parliament, not only in the Congress itself, but by publication in the press. "This," says Ramsay, "is supposed to be the last offering made by his pen in favor of America. He was a statesman of great decision and energy, and one of the ablest political writers Carolina has produced" (*Hist. of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 456). While in Congress Mr. Drayton was sent on two important missions. One of these was as a member of a committee sent to General Washington at Valley Forge; the other, to meet the French minister on his arrival in the Delaware. He was called to account by General Charles Lee for animadversions made by him upon the general's conduct at the battle of Monmouth, 28th of June, 1778, and challenged, but he declined to meet Lee because of the office he still held of Chief Justice of South Carolina, which he regarded as precluding his meeting him on the field. He died while attending Congress in Phila-



broken in spirit after giving his parole to Prévost during his invasion; George Gabriel Powell, who had presided at the first convention in 1775, was also dead; Colonel Owen Roberts had been killed at Stono. Rawlins Lowndes, who had always been opposed to independence and separation from England, though he had, as president, approved the constitution of 1778, had abandoned the struggle, and, with the old men Henry Middleton and Gabriel Maingault, had retired to their plantations and accepted the reëstablishment of British rule. Henry Laurens, the first president of the Council of Safety, and afterward president of the Continental Congress, was in Philadelphia preparing to sail for Holland as Minister Plenipotentiary to that kingdom, and was soon to be captured at sea and thrown into the Tower of London, where he was to remain until the end of the war. The Revolutionary party was thus completely broken up. There remained of them, out of prison or the grave, but one man to continue the struggle; and that was John Rutledge. Fortunately, he was clothed with full powers to keep alive in his own person, and ultimately, if possible, to restore, the State government.

There can be little doubt that at this time wise rulers might with care and moderation have reëstablished the Royal authority. Had Lieutenant Governor William Bull been sent back from England, whither he had gone, and reinstated in his government with full commission and powers such as the Revolutionists had conferred upon John Rutledge; had military rule been superseded, and the violence and rapacity of the army put down, — South Carolina might probably, even at this late day, have been reconciled again to become a British province. But the Ruler of Nations had ordered otherwise.

delphia in September, 1779. His remains were interred in the cemetery of Christ Church in that city.

Three weeks after the capture of the town, to wit, on the 5th of June, more than two hundred citizens presented an address to Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot, congratulating them upon their success and declaring their readiness to return to their allegiance to his Majesty. These "addressers," as they were styled, were doubtless substantial and respectable citizens, but they were neither principal inhabitants, as Rivington's *Royal Gazette* announced,¹ nor had any of them been leaders in the popular government, as Ramsay alleges.² If they had, neither he nor any other historian of the times has mentioned wherein they took such leading parts. They were mostly Scotch merchants doing business in Charlestown; but among them were men of well-known families and stanch Royalists. John Wragg heads the list, and among the signers were Gideon Dupont, Jr., Jacob Valk, Christopher FitzSimons, Alexander Oliphant, Paul Hamilton, Robert Wilson, Hugh Rose, Christopher Williman, Hopkins Price, Thomas Elfe, Aaron Locock, Isaac Maryck (Mazyck), Allard Belin, and John Wagner. None of these names appears in any of the revolutionary proceedings. That the greater part of these addressers had been in arms against the British during the siege was not to be wondered at when every able-bodied man in the town was compelled to do militia duty. One of them, John Wells, Jr., it is true, had kept a diary during the siege, from which we have quoted and which gives no intimation of his favoring the British cause; but his is the only name connected with the defence of the town which appears in the address. Against these addressers there was much bitterness of feeling on the part of the Revolutionists; and their estates were confiscated by an act of a General

¹ *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 148.

² Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 110.



Assembly which met in 1782, before the formal end of the war. But the address itself when read, except for the fact that it congratulated the British commanders upon their victory, expressed only the sentiments of a great number of their fellow-citizens. It declared that, although the right of taxing America in Parliament excited considerable ferment in the minds of the people, yet it might, with a religious adherence to truth, be affirmed that the people of South Carolina did not entertain the most distant thought of dissolving the union that so happily subsisted between them and their parent country; and that when, in the progress of that fatal controversy, the doctrines of independence (which originated in the more northern colonies) made its first appearance among them, their very nature revolted at the idea; and they looked back with the most profound regret at those convulsions that gave existence to a power for subverting a constitution for which they always had, and ever should retain, the most profound veneration, and substituting in its stead a rank democracy which, however carefully digested in theory, on being reduced into practice had exhibited a system of domination only to be found among the uncivilized part of mankind or in the history of the dark and barbarous ages of antiquity.¹ There was in this but little enlargement upon John Rutledge's address when he refused to approve the constitution of 1778. He had refused to approve that document because, he said, it closed the door to a reconciliation with the mother country, which, he declared, was as desirable then as ever. He had then declared, also, that "the people preferred a compound or mixed government to a simple democracy or one verging toward it, perhaps because, however unexceptionable democratic power might appear at the first

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 443.

view, its effect had been found arbitrary, severe, and destructive."¹

The addressers went on to declare that they sincerely lamented that after the repeal of those statutes which gave rise to the trouble in America, the overtures made by his Majesty's commissioners from time to time had not been regarded by their late rulers. To this fatal inattention were to be attributed, they said, those calamities which had involved the country in a state of misery and ruin, from which, however, they trusted it would soon emerge by the wisdom and clemency of his Majesty's auspicious government and the influence of prudential laws adapted to the nature of the evils they labored under; and that the people would be restored to those privileges in the enjoyment whereof their former felicity consisted.

Though their estates were to be confiscated for the declaration of these views in this manner, these addressers doubtless expressed the opinions of many more than the two hundred and ten who signed their names to the paper. None others, it is true, addressed the British commanders in a congratulatory manner, but many applied to them for a restoration to their rights as subjects of Great Britain upon substantially the same grounds. Ramsay declares that after the fall of Charlestown, excepting in the extremities of the State which border on North Carolina, the inhabitants who continued in the country preferred submission to resistance.

Besides the dispersion or capture of all the leading Revolutionists in the State, and the prevalence of the sentiments expressed in the address to Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot, there was another powerful motive inducing the people to hasten their submission; and that was the widespread belief, to which we have before alluded,

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. I, 136.

that in order to secure the independence of the others Congress had determined to sacrifice the Southern States. The mere fact of the failure of Congress to send assistance at all adequate to meet the powerful efforts which the British put forth in the invasion of South Carolina was of course in itself sufficient to give rise to such an impression. But there is strong reason to believe that the apprehension had also substantial basis of fact upon which to rest. General Thomas Pinckney, then a Major in the Continental service, who, as it has appeared, had been sent out of Charlestown and who was with Governor Rutledge at this time, relates that while at Camden on their retreat, Governor Rutledge received a letter from a member of the South Carolina delegation in Congress, informing him that despondency for the fate of the Southern States was the universal sentiment; *but that he still indulged the hope that Carolina would remain a member of the Union.*¹ This guarded and diplomatic language, necessarily employed in a correspondence running the danger of interception at the time, was fully explained by John Mathews, who succeeded Rutledge as Governor, but who was then a member of Congress. In after life Mathews repeatedly declared that through the intrigues and the suggestion of the French ambassador, it was at the time contemplated by some in Congress to purchase from Great Britain *peace and independence of a large portion of the United States by the sacrifice of the Carolinas and Georgia.* Garden, who makes the statement, declares that Governor Mathews did not conceal the name of the individual who had engaged to introduce and advocate the measure. Fired with resentment and indignant that even in the private circles of society a proposal so base and disgraceful should have been inspired, Mathews deter-

¹ Garden's *Anecdotes*, 180-191.

mined at once to put the virtue of the delegated representatives of his country to the test. Repairing to Congress, he forcibly reminded them of their bond of union; that the several States were pledged to each other through every variety of fortunes to accomplish the end of their association or to fall together. "I will regard the man," he exclaimed, "who would attempt to weaken those sacred ties as the fit object of universal execration; and in the event that the members of Congress should so far debase themselves as to listen to his nefarious proposal, after having in conjunction with my colleagues protested against the measure and pointed out the source of the evil, I will say to my constituents, make your own terms with the enemy — no longer regard as associates, nor put your trust in men who, appalled by their fears and under the influence of a foreign power, to secure themselves from harm make no scruple to doom their friends to destruction." Mr. Bee and Mr. Eveleigh, two other members of Congress from South Carolina, supported Mr. Mathews in this remonstrance.

That the subject had been broached and discussed in Congress there is no doubt. M. de la Luzerne, writing to the Count de Vergennes, thus discusses it: —

"After the taking of Charlestown the English practised much greater moderation towards the inhabitants of the South than they had done towards those of the Middle and Eastern States. Their plan was to sever the Carolinas and Georgia, and they seemed at this time to have abandoned the idea of reducing the Northern States. They commenced publishing a gazette at Charlestown in which they circulated insinuations that the Northern States had abandoned the South, and that they were about to make an arrangement with England which would exclude the Carolinas and Georgia. *The members of Congress are divided as to their interest and objects. Some are for using all efforts for rescuing the South. Others think the people there have shown too little zeal and activity in the cause, and that it is not expe-*



*dient to put in jeopardy the safety of the North by rendering extraordinary aid to people who are so indifferent about their own independence. One party speaks secretly of an expedition against Canada, another magnifies the difficulties of taking New York, one insists on an expedition to the South during the summer, another is for a combined enterprise against Quebec. The British at the South talk of peace and encourage the people to return to their former allegiance. It is possible that the British will make a proposition to the ten Northern States tending to assure their independence, and their scheme will be to form into a new government the two Carolinas, Georgia, East Florida, and the Bahama Islands, which together would make a possession."*¹

But there is still more direct evidence. A committee had been appointed by Congress to remain near Washington's headquarters, with large powers as to men and supplies, and to sanction any operations which the Commander-in-chief might not think himself at liberty to take without it. This committee consisted of General Philip Schuyler, who had been made to give way to Gates just before Saratoga, John Mathews from South Carolina, just mentioned, and Nathaniel Peabody. On the 21st of May Duane, a member of Congress, wrote to Schuyler:—

"That the reënforcements ordered to the southward should be halted is obvious for the reasons you assign. But do you expect such a proposition from a Northern member, deeply interested in strengthening the main army? It is a question of the utmost delicacy and even danger; for, however groundless, *an opinion has been propagated that Congress means to sacrifice the two Southernmost States, and it has been productive of the greatest animosity and discontent.* We have privately stated the subject to some of the Southern gentlemen, who, though I believe convinced of the propriety of the measure, did not choose to have it adopted, much less to propose it. There is but one person from whom it can originate with any prospect of success. If we had undertaken it, nothing would have resulted but disappointment and the loss of personal confidence."²

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 92, note.

² *Ibid.*, *supra*.

Was the opinion groundless that Congress meant to sacrifice the two Southern States when a member of it was thus approving of a proposition of the chairman of the Committee on the Conduct of the War that all reinforcements for them should be halted? Was it not, in this letter, contemplated to abandon them to their fate? And was it surprising that such views, however carefully guarded, should be divulged, and create animosity and discontent?

A matter of such vital importance could not be kept within the confines of secret correspondence and discussions. It assumed a consequence which compelled Congress to take formal notice of it, and to adopt a resolution denying the report, and declaring that the confederacy was most sacredly pledged to support the liberty and independence of every one of the States.¹ But this, it was thought, was manifestly a case of protesting too much. Had there been no substantial ground for the report, there would have been no occasion for its denial. But whether such a proposition was ever seriously entertained in Congress or not, or whether or not it amounted to anything

¹ The following is a copy of the resolution (Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 448) : —

“Whereas it has been reported, in order to seduce the States of South Carolina and Georgia from their allegiance to the United States, that a treaty of peace betwixt America and Great Britain was about to take place, and that these two States would be ceded to Great Britain.

“Resolved unanimously, That the said report is insidious and utterly void of foundation. That this confederacy is most sacredly pledged to support the liberty and independency of every one of the members; and in a firm reliance on the divine blessing will unremittingly persevere in every exertion for the establishment of the same, and for the recovery and preservation of any and every part of the United States that have been, or may hereafter be, invaded or possessed by the common enemy.

“Extract from the minutes.

“CHARLES THOMSON, *Secretary*.”



more than private suggestion and discussion, certain it is that the British commanders availed themselves of the rumor and spread it broadcast in proclamations through the country.¹

This undoubtedly was a most critical period in the Revolution. What might have been the consequences if wisdom had swayed the British commanders in South Carolina, says Garden, it appalls one to contemplate. Fatigued by the toils of war, disappointed by reiterated disasters, the prospect of success but glimmering at a distance and by many altogether despaired of, had the newly submitting inhabitants been suffered to enjoy the sweets of repose and the benefits of the security guaranteed by the capitulation, had kindness been substituted for oppression and persuasion used in lieu of force, though independence might ultimately have been gained it must have been at a more remote period and by far greater sacrifices both of treasure and blood.² Fortunately for the American cause the conduct of Sir Henry Clinton, Lord Cornwallis, and Lord Rawdon was so injudicious as to subject them to the pointed animadversions even of their own historians. The restoration of the colony to his Majesty's rule and the reestablishment of peace and prosperity does not appear to have been their first thought. Prévost's pillage had excited their rapacity, and the seizure of plunder and the division of spoils were the first matters which obtained their consideration.

Sir Henry Clinton states that, having been appointed by his Majesty his sole commissioner to his revolted colonies³ and the commander-in-chief of his armies, he con-

¹ Colonel Hill's MSS., *Campaigns of 1780*, Sumter papers.

² Garden's *Anecdotes*, 248.

³ This statement of Sir Henry Clinton is inconsistent with the fact that he joins Admiral Arbuthnot with him as "his Majesty's commis-

ceived it derogatory to the high station in which he was placed to have any concern in the prizes taken; but he nevertheless seems to have regarded it his duty to organize a most complete system of rapine and plunder. From a desire, as he says, of acting upon the most liberal principles with the navy in this matter during the siege, he sent Colonel Webster to inform Admiral Arbuthnot of a considerable quantity of stores which had already fallen into their hands, and to offer the navy a share, although he claimed that in strictness they could have no claim, as the stores were not taken on any river or even on any branch of a river which had a communication with the sea. Upon this, after the siege, certain officers of the navy were deputed to meet the field officers of the army to determine their respective shares; but they could not agree, the navy claiming a full half and the army being only willing to allow them a fourth, as being in proportion to their respective numbers. The dispute thus originating was not ended for years after the war; but with its progress this history is not concerned.¹ It is sufficient for the present that Commissioners of Captures were appointed. These were Major Moncreif, Major George Hay, and James Fraser, Esquire. As the Royal army was now much more numerous and extended over the country on all sides and had the convenience of a large fleet on the coast, and more leisure to attend to the business of pillage than had been practicable during Prévost's invasion, it was more thoroughly systematized and much greater collections were made. Great quantities of silver plate were secured, not sioners to restore peace and good government in the several colonies of North America," in their proclamation of June 1, 1780.

¹ *Memoranda &c. Respecting Unprecedented Treatment which the Army have met with Respecting plunder taken after a siege. And of which Plunder the Navy serving with the Army Divided More than ample share Now Fourteen Years since*, Pamphlet, London, 1794.

only on the plantations and in Charlestown, but silver was found buried even in Fort Moultrie,¹ and a large amount of it was taken in Camden, where it had been sent from the coast for safety.² Several gentlemen lost in the invasions of 1779 and 1780 each from five hundred to two thousand dollars worth of plate.³ Great quantities of indigo were taken, the value amounting to thousands of dollars. The merchants had sent their commodities out of the town, and stored them often near the water lines. These collections very generally fell into the hands of the British. At Camden were found many hogsheads of indigo and tobacco and stores of all kinds.⁴ Spoil collected in this way was disposed of for the benefit of the Royal army. The quantity brought to market was so great that, though it sold uncommonly low, yet the dividend of a major general was upward of £4000 sterling; while the private plunder of individuals on their separate accounts was often more than their proportion of the general stock.⁵ Over and above what was sold in Carolina several vessels were sent abroad loaded with rich spoils taken from the inhabitants. Upward of two thousand plundered negroes were shipped off at one embarkation.⁶ All of this plunder was supposed to have been taken from the rebels; but the Hessians made as little distinction in Carolina between friend and foe as they had in the Jerseys, and horses and provisions were always taken from one as well as the other. There was, however, some pro-

¹ Moore's *Diary*, vol. II, 274, note.

² *Siege of Charlestown* (Munsell), 186.

³ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 67.

⁴ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 206.

⁵ The value of the spoil which was distributed by English and Hessian commissaries of captures amounted to about three hundred thousand pounds sterling. Bancroft, vol. V, 378.

⁶ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 66.

vision, though utterly inadequate, made for payment for the latter. When horses or supplies were taken from known Loyalists, receipts were given; but when taken from parties whose principles were not so certainly known, certificates were issued. The distinction between these two classes of paper was that where the word "receipt" was made use of it was intended that the proprietor should be paid upon his presenting the receipt in Charlestown, and many of these receipts were afterward actually paid by orders on the British paymaster general. Where the word "certificate" was made use of, it was intended as an evidence in the hands of the holder of such property having been taken, but its payment was to depend on consequences, that is, on the merit or demerit of the party at the end of the war. Those who obtained certificates were great losers, having to dispose of them to speculators, who would take them at an enormous discount.¹ This was a cause of great dissatisfaction to the King's friends as well as to his enemies.

As had happened in Prévost's invasion, the negroes flocked to the British encampments, where, crowded together, they were attacked by camp fever; and small-pox, which had appeared in Charlestown and on the coast just before the invasion for the first time in seventeen years, took fast hold among them, spreading very rapidly. From these diseases and the want of proper shelter and care great numbers of these poor creatures died and were left unburied in the woods. A few instances occurred in which infants were found in unfrequented retreats attempting to draw the breasts of their dead mothers.²

In furtherance of the plan "of carrying his Majesty's arms from South to North," Sir Henry Clinton had

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 206.

² Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 67.

expected, with the large force he had taken to Charlestown, to capture the city at once, and then himself to proceed to the Chesapeake, leaving Earl Cornwallis with a sufficient force, not only to hold Charlestown, but to proceed into the interior upon the old idea that the people there, especially the Scotch at Cross Creek, would rise, enable the earl to set up a Royal government, and reënforce his army to an extent which would allow him to proceed into Virginia and Maryland, and there unite with him, Baltimore being their objective point,¹ and then to proceed still farther northward.² But the siege of Charlestown had been protracted; the town would not yield as had been expected, and for some reason Sir Henry Clinton would not carry it by storm, as he might easily have done in April. The delay was fatal to the present development of the proposed campaign. The season was regarded by the British, who dreaded the heat of the Southern climate, as too far advanced for such an undertaking; while with the approaching summer Washington's forces, it was supposed, would be augmented, and he would probably be himself on the move. To add to this, intelligence had been received that a French fleet, consisting of seven sail of the line and five frigates, with a large land force, commanded by M. de Ternay, was to have sailed from France early in the year, so that its arrival on the coast might soon be expected. Sir Henry Clinton was therefore anxious, not only to return to New York himself, but to take with him a large part of the army he had brought thence for the siege of Charlestown.

On the 1st of June Sir Henry, preparing for his return to New York, addressed a letter of instructions to Earl

¹ *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy* (Stevens), vol. I, 65-102, 144-210, 213-214, 334, 467; vol. II, 32.

² *Annual Register* (1781), vol. XXIV, 57.

Cornwallis, who was then in Camden, sketching the plan of campaign he proposed to adopt. He wrote that, as his lordship knew, it was a part of his plans to have gone into Chesapeake Bay, but that from information he had received — no doubt of the coming of the French fleet — it might be necessary to hasten to New York. When his lordship had finished his present campaign, that is, the crushing out any opposition that might remain in the State, he would be better able to judge what would be necessary to secure South Carolina and recover North Carolina. Should his lordship so far succeed in both provinces as to be safe from any attack during the approaching season, after leaving a sufficient force in garrison and such other outpost as he should think necessary, and such troops by way of moving corps as he should think sufficient, added to such provincial and militia corps as he should judge proper to raise, he should wish his lordship to assist in operations which would be carried on on the Chesapeake as soon as Admiral Arbuthnot and himself were relieved for apprehension of a superior fleet — *i.e.* of the appearance of a French fleet — and the season would allow. This might happen, he wrote, about September, or, if not earlier, in October. He therefore proposed that his lordship, with what force he could spare at the time from his important posts (which, however, should always be considered as the principal object), should meet the admiral, who would bring with him such additional force as he could spare to the Chesapeake. "Our first object," he wrote, "will probably be the taking posts at Norfolk or Suffolk or near the Hampton Road, and then proceeding up the Chesapeake to Baltimore."¹ There was great controversy subsequently over these instructions: Sir Henry Clinton maintaining that the movement across North Carolina into

¹ *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy* (B. F. Stevens, London), 213-214.



Virginia was to be dependent upon Earl Cornwallis's success in South Carolina; his lordship, on the other hand, insisting that he had been left no discretion but advance, as his part in the grand ministerial plan of campaign of carrying the war from South to North.

The scheme of subduing one part of the Americans by the other, and of establishing such an internal force in each subjugated colony as would be nearly, if not entirely, equal to its future preservation and defence, had been often held out and urged in England as exceedingly practicable, and, indeed, as requiring only adoption to insure its success. Preceding commanders had been much blamed at home for their supposed negligence in not availing themselves of means which were represented as so obvious, and which, it was said, would be so decisive of the war.¹ The wisdom of the measure depended of course entirely upon the number of persons in the colony so attached to the British government as to be willing, not only to maintain their own allegiance to the King, but to take up arms against their neighbors, friends, and, in very many instances, kinsmen.

South Carolina, it was supposed, presented a favorable opportunity of trying this plan from which so much was expected; and Sir Henry Clinton determined, therefore, before leaving, to inaugurate the policy. A handbill was published and circulated amongst the inhabitants by which they were reminded that as the commander-in-chief upon his first arrival in the province had taken no steps whatsoever to excite the loyal inhabitants to rise in favor of the Royal government whilst the King's troops, employed in the siege of Charlestown, might be unable to assist them in their efforts, nor had he drawn the King's friends into danger whilst any doubt could

¹ *Annual Register* (1780), vol. XXV, 223.

remain of their success; now that success was certain he trusted that one and all would heartily join, and, by a general concurrence, give effect to such necessary measures as might from time to time be pointed out. The helping hand of every man, it was said, was wanted to reëstablish peace and good government. Those who had families might form a militia to remain at home and preserve peace and good order in their own districts, whilst those who were young and had no families, it was expected would be ready to assist the King's troops in driving their oppressors and all persons whatsoever acting under the authority of Congress far from the province. For this purpose they should prepare themselves to serve with the King's troops for any six out of the next twelve months, under officers of their own choice, with the express stipulation that they should be allowed when on service the same pay, ammunition, and provisions as the King's troops, and should not be obliged to march beyond North Carolina on the one side or Georgia on the other. Having served for that period, it was said they would have paid their debt to their country, would be freed from all further claims of military service, except the usual militia duty at home, and would be entitled to enjoy undisturbed that peace, liberty, and security of property which they had contributed to establish.¹ A proclamation was also issued by the commander-in-chief, on the 22d of May, by which effectual countenance, protection, and support were promised to the King's faithful and peaceable subjects, and the most exemplary severity, with confiscations of property, denounced against those who should hereafter appear in arms within the province against his Majesty's government, or who should attempt to compel others to do so, or who should hinder or intimidate any of the King's

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 190; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 68, note.



faithful and loving subjects from joining his forces or performing those duties which their allegiance required. On the 1st of June another proclamation was issued in the names of Sir Henry Clinton and Admiral Arbuthnot, as commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies, by which a full and free pardon was promised to all those who, having been misled from their duty, should immediately return to their allegiance and a due obedience to the laws, excepting only such as were polluted with the blood of their fellow-citizens, shed under the mock forms of justice, for their loyalty to their sovereign and adherence to the British government. The promise of effectual countenance, protection, and support was renewed to the loyal and well affected, and as soon as the situation of the province would admit of it a reinstalment of the inhabitants in the possession of all those rights and immunities which they formerly enjoyed under the British government; *and also an exemption from taxation, except by their own legislation.*¹

So far no one could complain. Having obtained possession of the country, it was no more than the duty of the military commanders to protect the loyal citizens in the exercise of their rights under the King, and to restore the Royal government. They had the right, also, to call for the military services of those who professed their allegiance to his Majesty. Neutrality in the present condition of affairs was impossible. There could be no halting between the two conditions of men described by Clinton in his dispatches announcing his victory. Every one must choose whether he would be a prisoner or would bear arms for the King. Whether it was wise to call for and enforce such service between friends and neighbors

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 191-192; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 73-74; Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 438.

was a grave question of expediency worthy of the conqueror's most serious consideration. But his right to decide it was beyond question. The promise of pardon to those who had risen in arms to resist taxation without representation, — all that the South Carolinians had ever intended, — coupled with the promise of exemption from future taxation except by their own legislation, was a fair proposition. It gave to the South Carolinians all that they had demanded, and that with full pardon for the rebellious means they had employed to secure it. These measures were well calculated to encourage the loyal, and on the one hand to intimidate, and on the other to soothe, the rebellious, especially in view of the prevalent belief that South Carolina was to be abandoned by Congress. Up to this point everything was in the most prosperous train for the reestablishment of the Royal government. The people generally accepted the proffered terms of peace as they understood them; and all, with few exceptions, on applying, obtained either paroles as prisoners of war or protection as British subjects; the latter were required to subscribe a declaration of their allegiance to the King, but this, however, was frequently omitted in the hurry of business, and the privileges of British subjects were freely bestowed on some without any reciprocal engagements.¹

Fortunately for the cause of American independence, two events now occurred which checked the growing sentiment in favor of the King and aroused the deepest resentment and indignation. One of these was the accounts, just received, of Tarleton's barbarous massacre at the Waxhaws; and the other a proclamation issued by Sir Henry Clinton on his departure for New York. Tarleton's barbarity, instead of striking terror into the hearts of

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 114; Gordon's *Am. War*, 385.

the people, excited rather a thirst for revenge. Clinton's proclamation put an end to all hopes of neutrality.

It has been seen how long Lincoln had stood out to obtain the terms demanded by Gadsden for the militia and citizens; viz. that they should be secured in their persons and properties and should not be considered as prisoners, and that Sir Henry Clinton had, on the contrary, insisted upon their surrender as prisoners of war. The British commander had prevailed, and the militia and citizens were surrendered upon the terms he demanded. Then had followed the surrender of Williamson and Pickens at Ninety-Six, and of Kershaw at Camden, upon the terms granted the garrison in Charlestown—that is, as prisoners of war. The same terms had been held out to the people at large, and had been very generally accepted. But now Sir Henry Clinton realized that the condition he had so persistently insisted upon forcing on the people of the State practically precluded the carrying out of the plan of using one part of the inhabitants of the province to hold down the others. By accepting the opponents of the Royal authority as prisoners of war he had, in effect, secured them in their neutrality as long as the war existed. To meet this difficulty Sir Henry determined to alter the condition of those who had submitted upon parole, and to require of them the duties of active citizens and loyal subjects. For this purpose a proclamation was issued, bearing date the 3d of June, declaring that all inhabitants of the province who were prisoners on parole and were not in the military line (those who were in Fort Moultrie and Charlestown at the times of their capitulation and surrender, or who were then in actual confinement, excepted) should from and after the 20th of that month be freed and exempted from all such paroles and be restored to all the rights and duties of citizens and inhabitants. And by the

same proclamation it was also declared that all persons under the above description who should afterward neglect to return to their allegiance and a due submission to his Majesty's government should be considered as enemies and rebels to the same, and be treated accordingly. This proclamation was the point upon which the continuance of the Revolution in South Carolina turned.¹

It was not long, says Steadman, before the seeds of discontent appeared, which, when fully matured, produced a counter-revolution in the minds and inclinations of the people as complete and as universal as that which succeeded the fall of Charlestown. Of those originally attached to the American cause who, since the capture of Charlestown, had submitted to the British government either by taking the oath of allegiance or obtaining a parole, some were influenced by the ruinous appearance of American affairs, the despair of ultimate success, and a wish to save the remains of their property that had escaped the ravages and devastations of war; others were influenced by the fear of punishment if they persisted longer in maintaining an opposition apparently fruitless; and not a few by the hope of being suffered to live quietly upon their estates as prisoners upon parole and enjoying a kind of neutrality during the remainder of the war. The determination of Congress to send a part of General Washington's army to the assistance of their adherents in South Carolina, though now so late, of which they had just learned, dispelled the apprehensions of the two first

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution in So. Ca.*, vol. II, 441; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 73; McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, vol. II, 319. "It is remarkable," says Curwen, "that in the rebellion of '98 in Ireland the same plan was adopted and successfully executed by Lord Cornwallis, aided by two at least of those who had been his chief agents in South Carolina — Lord Rawdon, then Earl of Moira, and Colonel Wemyss, then General Wemyss." Curwen's *Journal and Letters*, 670.



of these classes, and aroused afresh their hopes. And the last was disgusted by the proclamation of Sir Henry Clinton, which, without their consent, abrogated the paroles that had been granted, and in one instant converted them either into loyal subjects or rebels. If it was proper policy, continues this author, at first to hold a middle course between these opposite extremes, the same policy required that it should have been continued for some time longer, and that the conditions of the inhabitants should have been altered rather at their own application, either individually or collectively, than by the arbitrary fiat of the commander-in-chief. In this manner a proper discrimination might have been made between the inhabitants who were really loyal and those who were nominally so; but by pursuing the opposite course they were all blended indiscriminately together. Even the violent Revolutionist, unless he chose to leave the country, was obliged to assume the appearance of loyalty; and thus the foundation of mutual jealousy and distrust was laid amongst the inhabitants themselves. The Revolutionists complained that their condition was altered without their concurrence; and the Loyalists murmured because notorious rebels, by taking the oath of allegiance and putting on a show of attachment, became entitled to the same privileges with themselves.¹

A much less candid view of the situation at this time was presented in an article in the *Royal Gazette* of the 9th of February, 1782, and by the request — equivalent to an order — of Colonel Balfour, the commandant of the town, republished by Robert Wells & Son, Printers to his Majesty, in each issue of that journal for a fortnight, as containing a true representation of the conduct of the inhabitants, and the treatment those deserved who had

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 108, 190.

violated their parole. This paper, detailing at some length the principles upon which paroles and protections were granted, went on to say that the white inhabitants were in this manner divided into two classes, the one of prisoners on parole and the other of voluntary subjects. Then, after a long dissertation on the different modes of treating prisoners in different states of society in order to show that humanity was neither commanded by the law of nature, which authorized the putting to death of enemies by every fair means, nor by the law of nations, which vests in the captors an absolute property in the prisoner; and that paroles therefore could never have been demanded as a matter of right, but were given or not agreeably to the opinion entertained of the integrity of the prisoner, the author went on to argue that if this confidence was found to have been misplaced and that which was meant as a humane indulgence was converted into a source of injury, the more dangerous as unexpected and unguarded against, reason dictated that the offender should be treated agreeably to this severest right of war, which authorized the death of all persons taken in battle. This paper, thus put out by authority as representing the views of the British commanders, avoided the question in issue, and assumed the whole matter in dispute. And this was simply: Had the British the right to alter the terms they had given to the Americans while the latter had arms in their hands, and on the faith of which they had laid them down? There had been no surrender at discretion; the surrender had been upon terms — terms, it is true, dictated by the conquerors, but still upon terms. This was not a case in which the conquerors had the prisoner in possession and might take or spare his life at pleasure. On the contrary, Sir Henry Clinton had obtained the surrender of the garrison of Charlestown



upon a contract and pledge that the militia and citizens should be treated as prisoners of war on parole, and the same terms had been held out and granted to others who would come in and surrender. By this promise and pledge the British had obtained material advantages. Sir Henry Clinton may not yet have had positive information of the sailing of the French fleet when he made this stipulation; but he knew that France was at war with his nation, and that he might expect at any time an attack from that quarter, either for the relief of the besieged town or upon New York or elsewhere. It was of the greatest consequence to him, therefore, to procure the surrender of Charlestown as speedily as possible, and that without the loss necessarily attendant upon a storm of the works. These advantages he obtained by the promise that the militia and citizens should be treated as prisoners on parole.

But it was further argued in this paper, as it was assumed in the proclamation, that because the rebel forces in South Carolina had been dispersed, the province should be regarded as having been reconquered and regained to his Majesty, and that hence the duration and protection of the parole had come to an end. This specious argument was much relied upon. But it will not bear a moment's examination. The parole was surely to continue during the war unless the person giving it was recaptured or exchanged. But what was the war during which it was so to hold? The terms of the surrender of Charlestown and the army had been negotiated with General Lincoln, a Continental officer. General Prévost, the year before, had refused to treat with Governor Rutledge as representing the State of South Carolina, and would only treat with General Moultrie, a Continental officer. The army surrendered was a Continental army — that is, it was an army of the thirteen United States. The war

was between Great Britain on the one side and the thirteen United States and France on the other; and it was well known to the British that there was a treaty between France and the United States by which neither country could make peace without the consent of the other. The war, therefore, during which the parole was to be of force was the general war between these powers, and not a war between Great Britain and South Carolina. It might be, as it did afterward happen, that South Carolina should be regained to the States. Unless the person giving the parole was therefore released by exchange or recapture, he was a prisoner until the government of the United States was overthrown or peace was declared between those States collectively, France, and England. The attempt by the proclamation arbitrarily to change the condition of the South Carolinian who had surrendered from that of a prisoner to that of a subject was a violation of the contract of surrender, and released every one to whom it was applied from the obligation of his parole. This was the view taken by many who would otherwise have remained neutral during the rest of the war.

The British commanders made another mistake as disastrous to the cause of the King as the breach of faith in the matter of the paroles. The great body of the Scotch-Irish who had come into the province during the twenty years preceding the Revolution, as has been before observed, had taken no active part in the movement. They had had their own more pressing troubles with the robbers, horse-thieves, and vagrants on the frontier; and while the dispute had been going on in the Low Country about taxation without representation in the Parliament in England, they had been trying in vain to obtain representation in the local government at home, and courts to preserve order and administer justice in the land they

were settling. True, as has elsewhere been explained, it had not been the fault or neglect of the people on the coast that these evils had not been remedied, and that their unfortunate condition was allowed to continue. It had been the fault of the government in England.¹ But this was not understood by these people at the time. They were not concerned about the taxation on the tea nor the collection of revenue, which they did not feel; nor, on the other hand, were they disposed to unite in a revolution under the lead of those by whom they considered themselves aggrieved. The Rev. Mr. Tennent had, therefore, met with little success in his mission in 1775, nor had he succeeded in arousing their sympathies to any great extent by his broadsheets upon the disestablishment of the Church in 1778. These pious, God-fearing, industrious people had scarcely been heard from during the four years the war had lasted. Some few of them had been with Richard Winn in Richardson's Snow Campaign and in his company under Thomson on Sullivan's Island on the 28th of June, 1776; some had been with John McLure at Monck's Corner; and a few more had gone with Davie to Charlestown and fought at Stono; but the people generally to the north of Camden were merely passive. They had not as yet been enlisted in the cause and had taken no part in the contest when Tarleton burst upon them in pursuit of Buford, and horrified, and for the moment stunned them, by his terrible massacre. But butchery, however horrible, was not to appall men who were descended from the defenders of Londonderry and Enniskillen. It only aroused the dormant fierceness and indomitable courage of their nature.

Fortunately, says Johnson, the British felt too confident in themselves, or too much contempt for their enemy,

¹ *Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 623-643.

to act with moderation or policy. Amidst the infatuation of power and victory their commanders appear to have forgotten that a nation may submit to conquest, but never to insult. They seem to have forgotten also that religion, which looks to another world for its recompense or enjoyments, becomes the most formidable enemy that can be raised up in this. As the Dissenters of New England had the reputation of having excited the war, Dissenters generally became objects of odium to the enemy. Hence their meeting-houses were often burnt or destroyed. One of them in Charlestown was converted into a horse-stable; in the populous settlement of the Waxhaws their minister was insulted, his house and books burnt, and *bellum internecionis* declared against all the Bibles which contained the Scotch version of the Psalms.¹ At the command of Major Wemyss, who used the torch as Tarleton did the sword, the church of Indiantown, in what was then St. Mark's Parish, was burnt because he regarded all Presbyterian churches as "sedition shops." The Holy Bible, too, with "Rouse's Psalms" indicated the hated rebellious sect, and was universally consigned to the flames.²

Thus, in the course of a few weeks, the British had released their prisoners from their paroles and had converted the neutrals in the State into their most implacable enemies. The war spirit was no longer confined to a class in South Carolina; it had taken fire and pervaded the whole people. The heroic period was now to begin.

¹ *Life of Greene* (Johnson), vol. II, 287-288.

² *Hist. of Williamsburg Church*, 56.



CHAPTER XXVI

1780

SIR HENRY CLINTON, having issued his famous proclamations, the effects of which have been told, embarked for New York on the 5th of June, carrying with him all the troops that could be spared, leaving the Earl of Cornwallis in the command of those that remained, with the charge, as we have seen, of carrying the war into North Carolina as soon as the season of the year and other circumstances would permit. The force left under Lord Cornwallis amounted to about four thousand men, and these men in the meantime were dispersed in cantonments so as to cover the frontiers of both South Carolina and Georgia. The principal force was at Camden, under the command of Lord Rawdon.¹ It consisted of the Twenty-third and Thirty-

¹ Francis, Lord Rawdon, Earl of Moira, was born December 7, 1754, and was at this time but twenty-six years of age. Having completed his education, about the commencement of the American war his lordship entered the army, and embarked with his regiment for Boston. He distinguished himself at the battle of Bunker Hill. His rise in the army by purchase and family interests was very rapid. In 1778 he was appointed Adjutant General to Sir Henry Clinton, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the army. In this position he rendered conspicuous service in the Jerseys and at Monmouth. He was now about to enter upon a career scarcely less distinguished than that of Lord Cornwallis, and like him was after the Revolution to be sent to India as Governor General. Lord Rawdon on his return to England was created a peer of Great Britain, and nominated one of his Majesty's aides-de-camp, but he afterward joined the Prince of Wales's fast set. It is said that the paper of his Royal Highness, Lord Moira, and the Archbishop of Canterbury (Cornwallis) was sold by a butcher in St. James at twenty-five per cent

third Regiments, the Volunteers of Ireland, a corps raised by Lord Rawdon while the British army was in possession of Philadelphia, and which became famous for its fighting qualities, Tarleton's legion, Browne's and Hamilton's corps of provincials, and a detachment of artillery. Major McArthur with the two battalions of the Seventy-first was advanced to Cheraw to cover the country between Camden and Georgetown, and to open communication with the loyal Highland settlement at Cross Creek. Georgetown was garrisoned by a detachment of provincials. Camden was connected with the District of Ninety-Six by a strong post at Rocky Mount upon the Catawba, at the point of division between the present counties of Chester and Fairfield. This post was garrisoned by the New York volunteers and some militia under Lieutenant Colonel Turnbull. At Ninety-Six were stationed three battalions of Royal provincials and some companies of light infantry at first commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Balfour, and afterward by Lieutenant Colonel Cruger. Major Ferguson's corps of Royal provincials and a body of loyal militia were not stationary, but traversed the country between the Catawba and the Saluda. At Augusta Lieutenant Colonel Browne commanded, with his own, a detachment of some other regiments. The rest of the British troops were stationed at Charlestown, Beaufort, and Savannah. Brigadier General Patterson commanded at Charlestown and Lieutenant Colonel Alured Clark at Savannah.¹ The British line thus ran through the present counties of Chesterfield, Kershaw,

on the pound. It is a curious and interesting fact that Lord Rawdon, Tarleton, Hanger, and McMahon, who served together in South Carolina, were afterward all intimates of the coterie of the Prince as against the father, his Majesty George III. *British Military Library* (London, 1801), vol. I, 85; *Memoirs of George IV* (Robert Huish, London, 1830), 303.

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 195.



Fairfield, Newberry, and Abbeville. They held quiet possession of all the State to the south and east of that line.

In the beginning of June Colonel Lord Rawdon, with the Volunteers of Ireland and a detachment of cavalry of the legion, advanced from Camden into the Waxhaws, which he expected to find a friendly as well as prosperous settlement. But, disappointed in the disposition of the people, after a short stay there he fell back to Camden.

The scene of the Revolution in South Carolina and the actors in it were now alike changed. New men now appeared upon the field,—men who had not met under the Liberty Tree, nor marched in procession with forty-five lights in honor of Wilkes; nor pledged themselves in ninety-two glasses for the Massachusetts non-rescinders, around a table with twenty-six bowls of punch for the members of the Carolina Assembly who had supported their Massachusetts brethren; men who had not attended the Convention under the Exchange in 1774; who had not been of the Council of Safety; who had not countenanced the tarring and feathering of those not yet prepared to abandon the King; men in short who had had nothing to do with bringing on the Revolution were now to take up its fallen standard and to restore its sinking fortunes. These new leaders, under Rutledge, who himself had so long been unwilling to close the door to reconciliation with the mother country, now seizing the moment of resentment and indignation at the breach of faith and atrocities committed by the British, turned the popular sentiment of the State against the invaders, organized partisan bands, and inaugurated a system of warfare which broke up the plans of the enemy, retarded their movements, harassed their outposts, surprised and captured their convoys, and often with the most brilliant movements obtained signal advantages, sometimes achieving no mean

victories, and always bearing defeat and disaster without loss of faith or spirit. These men, without Continental or State commissions, were the redeemers of the State when the regular forces were captured and dispersed. It is not too much to say that without the partisan leaders of South Carolina and their followers the independence of America would never have been achieved. This will we think clearly appear as we proceed. Chief among these were Sumter, Marion, and Davie. Pickens was later to throw off the bond which now restrained him, and to associate his name indelibly with theirs; but in this most critical period of their country's struggle these three were the men who stepped into the breach and stayed the tide of oppression which was rising to overwhelm their people. None of these, as we have said, had anything to do with bringing on the Revolution, but each had already taken a subordinate part in the war.

Thomas Sumter was born the 14th of July, 1736, in Hanover County, Virginia. His father's family were from Wales, but had removed to England and thence migrated to Virginia. His mother was a Virginian of English stock. Sumter had served in the Virginia Provincial Corps in the French and Indian Wars, and was present at Braddock's defeat in 1755. He had afterward been sent by Governor Dinwiddie on a mission to the Cherokees, and had then accompanied Oconostota and his chiefs to England on their mission in 1762. After this he had settled in South Carolina and married Mary Cantey, a member of one of the oldest and most prominent families in the province.

In the commencement of the Revolution, Sumter, it will be recollected, had been a friend of Moses Kirkland, who had deserted the cause in 1775, and gone to the British, and in consequence Sumter himself had been looked

upon with suspicion and distrust when he sought a commission from the Council of Safety. Indeed, Drayton and Tennent had thought it necessary to warn the Council to be cautious in giving it to him; he was only taken by the Revolutionists on probation; Colonel Richardson, with whom he went on the Snow expedition as Adjutant General, promising "to keep a sharp eye on his conduct." It is curious that neither Drayton, Tennent, nor Richardson lived to know that they had nearly excluded from the service of the State one who was in great part to redeem it when all the living leaders of the Revolution were in captivity or exile. Sumter had, however, received his commission, and had afterwards been appointed to the command of the Sixth South Carolina Provincial Regiment, in February, 1776, and as such had been put upon the Continental establishment in September of that year. He had been present at the eastern end of Sullivan's Island under Colonel Thomson at the battle of Fort Moultrie, but had had no opportunity of distinguishing himself in that action. Domestic affliction coming upon him, having lost all of his children but one, the inactivity of the service at that time induced him to resign in September, 1777. He had then remained in retirement upon his plantation until the fall of Charlestown, but soon after that event, on the 28th of May, 1780, again took the field. He left home a few hours before Tarleton, in his pursuit of Buford, reached his plantation, and escaped into North Carolina, where he joined Governor Rutledge. Tarleton, upon reaching Sumter's plantation and finding that he was gone, burnt his house. From that time until the war was practically over Sumter devoted himself to the service of his country in its struggle for independence. This having been achieved in a great measure by him, he was at last forced from the field by the intrigues of those whose successful careers were

rendered possible by his exploits, and who came into the State to reap the fruits of his service.

Sumter was a man of large frame, well fitted in strength of body to the toils of war. "His aspect was manly and stern," says Lee, — who, however, it may be observed here in passing, united with Greene, as we shall see, to suppress him, — "denoting insuperable firmness and lofty courage. He was not overscrupulous as a soldier in his use of means, and was apt to make considerable allowances for a state of war. Believing it warranted by the necessity of the case, he did not occupy his mind with critical examination of the equity of his measures, or of their bearings on individuals, but indiscriminately pressed forward to his end — the destruction of the enemy and liberation of his country. In his military career he resembled Ajax, relying more upon the fierceness of his courage than upon the results of unrelaxing vigilance and nicely adjusted combination. Determined to deserve success, he risked his own life and the lives of his associates without reserve — enchanted with the splendor of victory, he would wade through torrents of blood to attain it. He drew about him the hardy sons of the upper and middle grounds, brave and determined like himself, familiar with difficulty and fearless of danger, and traversed the region between Camden and Ninety-Six.¹

The same general character is given him by Garden. "No man," says this author, "was more indefatigable in his efforts to obtain victory, none more ready for the generous exposure of his person and the animating example of intrepidity to deserve it. His attacks were impetuous and generally irresistible. He was far less inclined to plan than to execute; and on many occasions, by an

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 74.

approach to rashness, accomplished what prudence would have forbidden him to attempt."

Dr. Caldwell describes him as greatly superior to Marion in personal strength. Trusting less, he says, to stratagem and skill, he placed his fortune much more exclusively on his daring resolution and the execution of his sword. Warm in temperament and devoted to his country, whatever could contribute to rescue her from the invader and establish her independence became an object of his ardent affection. He was also enamoured of brilliant achievement for its own sake. To victory and the glory of achieving it he would cut his way through every danger, regardless alike of his own blood and that of his enemy. If, from want of due precaution or from an exuberance of courage, misfortune and defeat sometimes assailed him, they neither broke his spirit nor enfeebled his hopes. Unmoved as the firmest Roman in the best times of the commonwealth, he never despaired of the arms of his country. With an inflexible resolution to witness her triumph or not to survive her overthrow, he pressed toward his object with direct aim and unrelaxing vigor.¹ Lord Cornwallis, writing to Tarleton to give energy to his pursuit, says, "I shall be glad to hear that *Sumter* is in no condition to give us further trouble; he certainly has been our *greatest plague* in this country."²

These sketches of Sumter by Garden and Caldwell were written after, and bear the impress of, that of Lee; before fully accepting their criticisms upon Sumter's rashness, it should, therefore, be observed that Lee was Sumter's rival, and, as it will appear hereafter, was jealous of his fame, and intrigued with Greene to keep him down. As we

¹ *Memoirs of the Life and Campaigns of the Hon. Nathaniel Greene, Major General, etc.* (Charles Caldwell, M.D.), 111.

² *Garden's Anecdotes*, 32.

come to study his career more closely by the light of material to which neither Garden nor Caldwell had access, it will appear, we think, that if Sumter was at times rash and lacked the caution of Marion, he was nevertheless a man of larger and broader views, and with a much greater military instinct than has been represented; and that, indeed, had his strategy prevailed, and not been overruled by Greene, it might have been better for the cause,—the British army might have been crushed immediately after the evacuation of Camden by Lord Rawdon in May, 1781, before the accidental reënforcement which enabled Stewart to hold his ground when assailed by Greene at Eutaw the following September.

Francis Marion was of Huguenot descent. He was born in St. John's Berkeley,¹ in the year 1732, and so was four years older than Sumter. In 1759 he settled in St. John's Parish at a place called Pond Bluff, about four miles below Eutaw, the famous battlefield. It was in this year that the Cherokee War broke out, and Francis Marion volunteered in his brother's troop of provincial cavalry. In 1761 he served in the expedition under Colonel Grant as a lieutenant in Captain William Moultrie's company, forming a part of a provincial regiment commanded by Colonel Middleton.² General Moultrie said of him in that campaign that he was an active, brave, and hardy soldier, and an excellent partisan officer. He was a member of the Provincial Congress of 1775, but does not appear to have taken any active part in its deliberations; and, as has been seen, he was appointed captain in the Second Regiment under Moultrie, to the command of which he succeeded. He had already seen considerable service. As major of the Second Regiment he was in the action of the 28th of

¹ *Simms' Magazine*, vol. I, 273.

² *So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrary), 350.



June, 1776. He had been with Moultrie during Prévost's invasion in 1779, and was present at the siege of Savannah. When Sir Henry Clinton arrived with his invading force, Marion was in command of a body of light troops at Sheldon, and with these he had joined Moultrie at Bacon's Bridge. There he had been relieved by Lieutenant Colonel Henderson, and had gone into the town. Before, however, the investment had been completed, an accident befell him which, no doubt regarded at the time as a great misfortune, turned out to be indeed a blessing in disguise to him and to his people. Dining one day with a party of Whigs at the house of a friend, according to a very general custom of the time his entertainer had turned the key upon his guests so that none could leave until the festivities were over. Marion's sense of duty, however, would not allow him to remain, and in attempting to escape from this drinking party, through a window, he fell to the ground and dislocated his ankle in a very serious manner. Being unfit for duty, he was sent out of the town upon a litter to his seat in St. John's Parish. This accident saved him from captivity with the rest of the garrison of the town. After Huger's defeat at Monck's Corner the whole of this part of the country was opened to the British, and to escape from their foraging and marauding parties Marion was obliged to move about from house to house, and often to hide in the woods. After the fall of the town, as soon as he was able, he set out for North Carolina to join any force that he might find there. On the road he met Major Peter Horry on a similar mission. Upon arriving at Hillsboro they found General Isaac Huger and Colonel White, whose regiments had been so badly cut up at Lenuds's Ferry, and learned from them that Washington had sent on a detachment of Continentals who were now on the march to aid South Carolina. There they met, also, Colonel Senf, the

engineer officer who had been in Charlestown, and by him were introduced to the Baron De Kalb, who was in command of the troops. Marion and Horry were received with great courtesy by De Kalb, and were soon appointed by him supernumerary aides. As such they accompanied the Baron on Gates's advance into South Carolina, and were with him until just before the battle of Camden, when Gates, confident of victory, to get rid of them sent them off to the Santee to destroy every scow, boat, or canoe that could assist an Englishman in his flight to Charlestown.¹ This was the commencement of Marion's brilliant career.

"Marion," says Lee, "was about forty-eight years of age, small in stature, hard in visage, healthy, abstemious, and taciturn. Enthusiastically wedded to the cause of liberty, he deeply deplored the condition of his beloved country. The commonwealth was his sole object; nothing selfish, nothing mercenary, soiled his ermine character. Fertile in stratagem, he struck unperceived; and retiring to those hidden retreats selected by himself in the morasses of the Pee Dee and Black rivers, he placed his corps not only out of the reach of his foe, but often out of the discovery of his friends.² A rigid disciplinarian, he reduced to practice

¹ Weems's *Life of Marion*, 120, says Gates sent him to the Santee "on the morning before the fatal action." James, p. 46, mentions his arrival at Lynch Creek "on the 10th or 12th of August," i.e. four or six days before the action. Williams's narrative (*Johnson's Life of Greene*, Appendix B, 458) speaks of his departure from Gates's army as of the 3d, thirteen days before the battle.

² Lieutenant Colonel Lee tells that, ordered to join Marion after Greene determined to turn the war back to South Carolina in 1781, an officer with a small party preceded him a few days' march to find out Marion, who was known to vary his position in the swamps of Pee Dee—sometimes in South Carolina, sometimes in North Carolina, and sometimes on the Black River. With the greatest difficulty did this officer learn how to communicate with the brigadier, and that by the accident of hearing among our friends on the north side of the Pee Dee of a small

the justice of his heart; and during the difficult course of warfare through which he passed calumny itself never charged him with violating the rights of person, property, or humanity. Never avoiding danger, he never rashly sought it; and acting for all around him as he did for himself, he risked the lives of his troops only when it was necessary. Neither elated with prosperity, nor depressed by adversity, he preserved an equanimity which won the admiration of his friends, and exacted the respect of his enemies. The country from Camden to the seacoast between the Pee Dee and Santee rivers was the theatre of his exertions.”¹

“Of his preëminent ability as a partisan officer, successfully opposing an active and enterprising enemy with an inferiority of force that is scarcely credible,” says Garden, “there can exist no doubt. He entered the field without men—without resources of any kind, and at a period when a great proportion of the inhabitants of the district in which he commanded, either from a conviction of the inutility of resistance, or the goading of unceasing persecution, had made them submissive to the enemy. To concealment he was indebted for security—and stratagem supplied the place of force. Yet always on the alert,—striking where least expected, retiring where no advantage could be hoped for by exposure,—he progressively advanced in the career of success till a superiority was obtained that put down all opposition. Far more disposed essentially to benefit his country than to give, by brilliant enterprise, increase to his own reputation, his first care provision party of Marion’s being on the same side of the river. Making himself known to this party, he was conveyed to the General, who had changed his ground since his party left him, which occasioned many hours’ search before his own men could find him. *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 174.

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 174.

was the preservation of the troops whom he commanded by strenuously avoiding an unnecessary hazard of their lives. It was his prudential conduct that so frequently occasioned a temporary retirement into fastnesses where pursuit was rarely ventured on, and if persisted in invariably attended with discomfiture and disgrace. But did occasion invite to victory — did carelessness in command, or the idea of security arising from distance, put the enemy though but for an instant off their guard — the rapidity, the impetuosity, of his attacks never failed to render the blow inflicted decisive and their destruction complete. Victory afforded additional claim to applause. Giving the rein to the most intrepid gallantry, and in battle exhibiting all the fire and impetuosity of youth, there never was an enemy who yielded to his valor who had not cause to admire and eulogize his subsequent humanity. The strictness of the discipline invariably maintained prevented every species of irregularity among his troops. His soul was his country's — his pride, the rigid observance of her laws — his ambition, to defend her rights, and preserve immaculate her honor and her fame. It would have been as easy to turn the sun from his course as Marion from the path of honor.”¹

Dr. Caldwell describes Marion as an officer whose stature was diminutive and his person uncommonly light, who rode when in service one of the fleetest and most powerful chargers the South could produce, and whom when in fair pursuit nothing could escape, and when retreating nothing could overtake.²

William Richardson Davie was of Scotch descent, but was born in Egremont in Cumberland County in the north of England on the 20th of June, 1756. When five years of age he had been brought to this country by his

¹ Garden's *Anecdotes*, 20.

² Caldwell, *Memoirs of Greene*, 107-109.



father, Archibald Davie, and was adopted by his uncle, the Rev. William Richardson, the Presbyterian minister at the Waxhaws, who resided at Landsford on the Lancaster side of the Catawba. Davie's youth was thus spent in this region which was to be the battle-ground of the Revolution during the remainder of this year, and which his own exploits were in a great measure to render famous. He was educated by his uncle and prepared for college at an academy in Charlotte, North Carolina, known as the "Queen's Museum," and afterward called "Liberty Hall." From this he entered Princeton College, where by his application and genius he obtained the reputation of an excellent student. But the din of arms disturbed these quiet shades, and Davie exchanged the gown for the sword. The studies of the college were closed and Davie joined Washington's army in the summer of 1776, and served in it as a volunteer during the campaign on Long Island. He then returned again to college and was graduated in the fall of that year with the first honors of the institution. After his graduation he pursued the study of the law in Salisbury, North Carolina, during the following two years of quiet in the South. But when the scene of war was changed to this section of the country, he at once again entered the field. He induced a worthy and influential but elderly gentleman by the name of Barnett to raise a troop of horse, and in this troop Barnett was elected Captain and Davie Lieutenant. His commission was given by Governor Caswell of North Carolina, and was dated the 5th of April, 1779. The company proceeded immediately to Charlestown; but the Captain soon after returning home on furlough, the command of the troops devolved on Lieutenant Davie, and it was at his request annexed to Pulaski's legion.

Davie, as has been seen, was made Brigade Major of

Cavalry and was severely wounded in the battle at Stono in June, 1779. He was incapacitated by this wound for service for nearly a year, and, returning to Salisbury, completed his course of studies and was admitted to the bar. But, recovering from his wound, he could not remain out of the field while such stirring events were taking place in the State in which he had been reared. In the winter of 1780 he obtained authority from the General Assembly of North Carolina to raise a troop of cavalry and two companies of mounted infantry. But the authority only was granted. North Carolina was unable to furnish or equip the legion. This Davie would not allow to be an obstacle in the way. His uncle, the Rev. William Richardson, had died in 1771, leaving him a considerable estate. This, as his biographer observes, with a patriotism worthy of eternal record, he disposed of, and with the funds thus raised he equipped his troops.¹

"Davie," says a historian, "was one of the most splendid and knightly figures on the American continent. He was then fresh from his law books and only twenty-five years of age. Tall, graceful, and strikingly handsome, he had those graces of person which would have made him the favorite in the clanging lists of feudal days. To this he added elegant culture, thrilling eloquence, and a graciousness of manner which was to charm in after days the *salons* of Paris."² He had won high honor and had been

¹ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 188; *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), Appendix, 577.

² General Davie was after the Revolution a member of the Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States, from North Carolina; Brigadier General, U.S.A.; Governor of North Carolina; and in June, 1790, was appointed with Chief Justice Ellsworth of the Supreme Court, U.S., and Mr. Murray, then Minister at The Hague, as ambassadors to France. In November, 1790, he sailed on this mission.

"In the most polished court of Europe the dignified person and grace-



dangerously wounded at Stono on the 20th of June, 1779. Since then he had expended the whole of his estate in equipping at his own cost the only organized body of troops now left to do battle in behalf of the cause he loved."¹

"General Davie," says another, "was not only distinguished as an intelligent, but an intrepid, soldier. His delight was to lead a charge; and possessing great bodily strength, is said to have overcome more men in personal conflict than any individual in the service."²

"Such was the soldier and the hero who was now in this dark and depressing hour of our history about to strike the British outposts and restore confidence and hope to the people. He was on familiar ground among the scenes of his early childhood and maturer years. He was inspired by a fervid ambition to deeds of valor and patriotism, and his friends and associates were to be witnesses of his achievements. Their hopes of deliverance from the sword and the prison or perhaps the gallows were centred on him, and with noble daring he entered the lists determined with his little band of patriots and soldiers to strike the foe before 'the harvest was gathered.'"³

"This distinguished leader," says Dr. Caldwell, "although younger by several years, possessed talents of a higher order and was much more accomplished in education and manners than either of his three competitors for fame (Sumter, Marion, or Pickens). For the comeliness of his person, his martial air, his excellence in horsemanship,

ful manners of Governor Davie were conspicuous. 'I could not but remark,' said an eye-witness, 'that Bonaparte in addressing the American Legation at his levees seemed to forget that Governor Davie was *second* in the mission, his attention being more particularly to him.'"
Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 198.

¹ Moore's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, vol. I, 265.

² Garden's *Anecdotes*, 39. ³ *No. Ca., 1780-81* (Schenck), 65.

and his consummate power of field eloquence, he had scarcely an equal in the armies of his country. So sonorous and powerful was his voice, so distinct his articulation, and so commanding his delivery, that the distance at which he could be heard was almost incredible. But his chief excellence lay in the magnanimity and generosity of his soul, his daring courage, his vigilance and address, and his unrelenting activity and endurance of toil. So ardent was his attachment to the cause of freedom and so disinterested his efforts to promote it, that in equipping for the field his corps of followers he expended his whole patrimonial estate."¹

General Davie was a Carolinian. He cannot be claimed exclusively by either North or South Carolina. He belonged to both. Reared in the Waxhaws in South Carolina near the North Carolina line, there was the scene of all his military exploits. His command was composed of Carolinians of both sides of the dividing line between the States. His civil and political life was spent in North Carolina, and it was that State whose honors he bore. Upon his retirement to private life he returned to Landsford on the Catawba in South Carolina, where he had been reared, and where he had joined Sumter on his expedition to Hanging Rock, and there he spent the remainder of his days, dispensing an elegant hospitality to his friends of the Revolution in both States, who gathered there to live over with him the days of their warfare and their glory.

These three men were now in North Carolina, each forming a nucleus of a force with which the war was to be renewed in the Southern States. Davie, as has been seen, had an organized corps, the only one formed regularly under a commission. Sumter was gathering around him

¹ Caldwell's *Life of Greene*, 113-114.

the refugees from his State and was forming a camp in Mecklenburg County. Marion had joined De Kalb on Deep River and was hospitably entertained by the Baron. But he and his party were an eyesore to Gates when he took command. Colonel Otho Holland Williams, the Adjutant General, thus describes them: "Colonel Marion, a gentleman of South Carolina, has been with the army a few days attended by a very few followers distinguished by small black leather caps and the wretchedness of their attire; their number did not exceed twenty men and boys, some white, some black, and all mounted, but most of them miserably equipped; their appearance was in fact so burlesque that it was with much difficulty the diversion of the regular soldiery was restrained by the officers; and the General himself was glad of an opportunity of detaching Colonel Marion at his own instance toward the interior of South Carolina to watch the motions of the enemy and furnish intelligence. These trifling circumstances," adds Colonel Williams, "are remembered in these notes to show from what contemptible beginnings a good capacity will rise to distinction. The history of the war in South Carolina will recognize Marion as a brave partisan if only the actions of the two last years' campaigns are recorded."¹

Davie's corps, though equipped and furnished by himself alone, from his own individual means, was nevertheless a regular organization authorized by the State of North Carolina, whose commission he bore; but the bodies gathering around Sumter under Hill, Bratton, Winn, the Hamptons, the Taylors, and Lacey, and around Marion and the Horrys, James, McCottry, Mouzon, Witherspoon, Vanderhorst and the Postells, were volunteers only, who came as the occasion demanded, serving without pay,

¹ Colonel Otho Holland Williams's narrative, *Johnson's Life of Greene*, vol. I, 485.

and at their own expense. These men were no mercenary soldiers, but patriotic citizens striking for liberty, giving freely of their own substance, and asking for no compensation for blood or treasure spent in the cause; shedding their blood and dying for their country, without even an enrolment of their names that their descendants might glory in their deeds.

We have a few pages since quoted Ramsay as saying that, after the fall of Charlestown, excepting in the extremities of the State which border on North Carolina, the inhabitants of South Carolina preferred submission to resistance. It is curious that while Cross Creek or Fayetteville in North Carolina was looked upon as the place most intensely loyal to the King, not far from it the people of Mecklenburg, on the border of the two States, were the most earnest and steadfast Whigs. This is the more remarkable, also, as the Scotch-Irish in the northwestern part of South Carolina had not taken any considerable part in the Revolution. It was in this neighborhood that the action was taken in May, 1775, setting up a local government.¹ It was in the same that the first collision was

¹ Without entering into the historical question as to the authenticity of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, it is enough here to say that there appears in the *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette* of June 13, 1775, a preamble and resolves of the Committee of the County, adopted on the 31st of May, from which we quote.

"Whereas by an address presented to his Majesty by both Houses of Parliament in February last the American colonies are declared to be in a state of actual rebellion, we conceive that all laws and commissions confirmed by, or derived from, the authority of king or Parliament are annulled and vacated, and the former civil constitutions for the present wholly suspended. To provide in some degree for the exigencies of this county in the present alarming period, we deem it proper and necessary to pass the following resolves."

Then follows a series of resolves declaring all commissions, civil and military, granted by the Crown null and void; that the Provincial Con-

now to occur between the Whigs and Tories. The Tories in North Carolina had risen precipitately in February, 1776, under Donald McDonald and had met with a crushing defeat at Moore's Creek. A similar defeat was now again to meet them from the same precipitancy. This time it was to be final.

Upon the defeat of Buford, Brigadier General Rutherford of North Carolina¹ had ordered out the militia in mass to obstruct the advance of the conquerors; and on the 3d of June nine hundred men were assembled at Charlotte, but they were dismissed when it was learned that the British had fallen back to Camden. When Lord Rawdon, however, advanced into the Waxhaw country, General Rutherford again assembled his militia; on the 12th eight hundred men were on the ground, and on the 14th they were organized. The cavalry under Davie was formed into two troops under Captains Lemmonds and Martin; a corps of light infantry was placed under Colonel William L. Davidson, a Continental officer,² and the remainder

gress of each province under the Continental Congress is invested with all legislative and executive powers within their respective provinces, suspending all former laws in the province, and providing for an independent government. See Johnson's *Traditions*, 79. There is, however, nothing in the *Gazette* to indicate that there was any first or previous set of resolutions.

¹ General Griffith Rutherford, an Irishman by birth, uncultivated in mind or manners, but brave, ardent, and patriotic. He commanded the North Carolina forces in the expedition against the "Over Hill" Cherokee Indians, joining General Williamson on the 14th of September, 1776, at Ellajay, and with him routing and subduing the Indians. Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 383-384.

² William L. Davidson was at this time Lieutenant Colonel of the First North Carolina Continental Regiment, who had been prevented from joining his regiment in Charlestown, and was thus saved from capture, and like Marion preserved for distinguished services in the field, but was to fall before the end of the war. *Historical Register* (Heitman); *No. Ca.*, 1780-81 (Schenck), 61; Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 263.

under the command of General Rutherford. Learning that a body of Tories was assembling in strong force under Colonel Moore at Ramsour's Mill, near where the town of Lincolnton now stands, General Rutherford, not willing himself to leave the front of the British, ordered Colonel Francis Locke and other officers to collect a body of militia and disperse it.

The uprising of the Tories at this time was without Lord Cornwallis's consent or approval. A correspondence had been kept up with the Loyalists in North Carolina, but his lordship had sent messengers to request their friends to attend to their harvest, collect provisions, and remain quiet till the King's troops were ready to enter the province, which would not be until the end of August or beginning of September.¹ But this prudent and necessary admonition was disregarded. One James Moore, whose father and family resided about six miles from Ramsour's Mill, had joined the British army the preceding winter, and leaving the detachment under Cornwallis on the march from Charlestown to Camden, arrived at his father's on the 7th of June, wearing a sword and old tattered suit of regimentals. He announced himself as Lieutenant Colonel of the Regiment of North Carolina Loyalists, commanded by Colonel Hamilton, and gave to the people of the neighborhood the first particular account they had received of the siege and capture of Charlestown and the advance of the British troops to Camden. Assembling some forty of the people on the 10th of June in the woods on Indian Creek, seven miles from Ramsour's, he gave them Lord Cornwallis's message that they should not embody at that time, but hold themselves in readiness, and in the meantime get in their harvest; and that as soon as the country could

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 196.

furnish subsistence to the army it would advance into North Carolina and support the Royalists.

Before the meeting broke up, however, an express arrived that Major McDowell of Burke County¹ with twenty men was within eight miles of them in search of the principal persons of their party. Confident of their strength, notwithstanding Lord Cornwallis's known wishes in the matter, the party determined to attack McDowell at once. They did not, however, march until the next morning, when, finding that McDowell had retired, they pursued, but not being able to overtake him Moore directed them to return home and meet him again on the 13th at Ramsour's Mill. On that day two hundred men joined Moore, and they were joined the next by many others, among whom was Nicholas Welch, a major in the regiment commanded by Colonel Hamilton. He also had lived in that neighborhood and had joined the British army eighteen months before. He was directly from the army of Lord Cornwallis and gave information of Colonel Buford's defeat. Wearing a rich suit of regimentals and exhibiting a number of guineas, he sought to allure some, while he endeavored to intimidate others, by his account of the success of the British army in all the operations of the South, and the inability of the Whigs to make further opposition. The party remained in camp until the 20th, during which time a detachment commanded by Moore made an unsuccessful attempt to capture Colonel Hugh Brevard and Major Joseph McDowell, each of whom had come into the neighborhood

¹ Major Joseph McDowell. He had served in his brother's regiment in the expedition against the Over Hill or Cherokee Indians in 1776 under Rutherford and Williamson, and was at Stono in 1779. He was familiarly known as "Quaker Meadow Joe," to distinguish him from his equally distinguished cousin of the same name, who was likewise known as "Pleasant Gordon Joe." Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 59; *King's Mountain and Its Heroes* (Draper), 472.

with a number of Whigs to break up the assembling Tories.

By the 20th nearly thirteen hundred Tories had assembled at Ramsour's, one fourth of whom were without arms. General Rutherford, as soon as he learned that Lord Rawdon had retired to Camden, resolved to concentrate his force and attack this party of Tories. He accordingly marched on the 18th from his camp south of Charlotte, and in the evening sent a dispatch to Colonel Locke, advising him of his movement and of the enemy's strength, and ordering Locke to join him on the 19th in the evening or on the 20th in the morning at the Tuckaseege Ford on the Catawba. General Rutherford's express did not reach Colonel Locke, and that officer, proceeding under his orders of the 14th, collected as many men as he could, so that by Monday, the 19th, he encamped on Mountain Creek, sixteen miles from Ramsour's, with a force amounting to about four hundred men. Here the officers met in council, and were unanimous in opinion that it would be unsafe to remain in that position, as the Tories were in greatly superior force within a few hours' march. It was at first proposed to recross the Catawba and wait reënforcements; but it was objected that a retrograde movement would embolden the Tories, whose numbers were increasing as fast as their own. Then it was proposed to march directly down the river and join General Rutherford, about thirty-five miles distant. Again it was objected that this movement would leave the families of many who were with General Rutherford exposed to the Tories, and it was insinuated that these propositions proceeded, if not from fear, at least from an unwillingness, so to meet the Tories; these taunts overcame all prudent counsels, and it was unanimously resolved to march at daybreak to the attack. An officer was sent to apprise

General Rutherford of this determination, and late in the evening the march was commenced from Mountain Creek. Passing down the south side of the mountain, the party halted at the west end of it for an hour in the night, where the officers met to determine the plan of attack. The only arrangements made for it, however, were that the companies commanded by Captains Falls, McDowell, and Brandon should act on horseback and march in front; all else was left to the officers to be governed by circumstances after they should come up with the enemy. The march was resumed, and the party arrived within a mile of the enemy's camp at daylight.

The Tories were encamped on a hill three hundred yards east of Ramsour's Mill and a half mile north of the present town of Lincolnton. They occupied an excellent position on the summit of a ridge, stretching nearly to the east on the south side of the millpond. The road leading to the Tuckaseege Ford by the mill crosses the point of the ridge in a northwestern direction. The ridge had a very gentle slope, and was then interspersed with only a few trees, giving the Tories a fire with full effect in front for more than two hundred yards. Their picket guard, twelve in number, were stationed in the road six hundred yards from the encampment, but when the horsemen, under Captains Falls, McDowell, and Brandon, came within sight, it was evident that their approach had not been anticipated.

The pickets fired and fled to their camp, and then ensued a desultory and confused engagement which can scarce be dignified as a battle, as there was little organization on either side and scarcely a plan of operation. It was an affair in which neighbors and personal friends fought, and, as the smoke from time to time would blow off, they would recognize each other. In some places the

Tories were crowded together in each other's way, and in others there were none. The gaps were, however, filled by those coming up from the rear, and the line of battle was gradually extended. The action became general and obstinate on both sides. The Tories, at length finding the left of their position in possession of the Whigs and their centre closely pressed, retreated down the ridge toward the pond. The Whigs pursued until they got entire possession of the ridge, when they discovered to their astonishment that the Tories had collected a force on the other side of the creek beyond the mill. Expecting the fight to be renewed, the Whigs attempted to form a new line, but only eighty-six men could be found to do so. Some had been scattered during the action, and others were attending to their wounded friends. After repeated efforts not more than one hundred and ten men could be collected.

In this situation messengers were sent to General Rutherford to urge him to press forward to their assistance. Rutherford had marched early in the morning, and at a distance of six or seven miles from Ramsour's was met by the officers who had gone to hasten his advance. Major Davie's cavalry was started at a gallop, and Colonel Davidson's infantry was ordered to hasten on with all possible speed. At the end of two miles they were met by others from the battle, who informed them that the Tories had retreated. Rutherford's troops arrived on the ground two hours after the battle had closed. The dead and most of the wounded were still lying where they fell.

The Tories, not aware of the disorder in the Whig ranks and considering themselves completely beaten, to cover their retreat, about the time the Whigs were sending to hasten General Rutherford's march, sent a flag proposing a suspension of hostilities to care for the wounded and to

bury the dead. To prevent the flag officer from perceiving their small number, Major James Rutherford and another officer were sent to meet him a short distance from the line. The proposition being made, Major Rutherford demanded that the Tories should surrender in ten minutes, and that then arrangements should be made as to the dead and wounded. In the meantime Moore and Welch gave orders that such of their men as were on foot or had inferior horses should move off singly as fast as they could. This was done, so that when the flag returned not more than fifty remained and they immediately fled. Moore with thirty men reached the British army at Camden, where he was threatened to be brought before a court-martial for disobedience of orders in attempting to embody the Royalists before the time appointed by the commander-in-chief, but it was deemed impolitic to press the matter further.

As there was no organization of either party, nor regular returns made after the action, says General Joseph Graham of North Carolina, from whose narrative this account of the battle has been taken, the loss could not be ascertained with correctness. Fifty-six lay dead on the side of the ridge where the heat of the action prevailed. Many lay scattered on the flanks and over the ridge toward the mill. It is believed that seventy were killed and that the loss was on each side equal. About one hundred men on each side were wounded and fifty Tories were taken prisoners. As there was no distinguishing uniform it could not be told to which party many of the dead belonged. Most of the Whigs wore a piece of white paper on their hats in front, and as many of the men on each side were excellent riflemen, this paper was a mark at which the Tories often fired and several of the Whigs were shot in the head.

In this battle neighbors, near relations, and personal friends fought, and as the smoke from time to time would blow off they would recognize each other. In the evening and on the next day the relatives and friends of the dead and wounded came in, and a scene was witnessed truly afflicting to the feelings of humanity.¹

The effect of this affair was completely to crush out the Tory element in that portion of the State, and they never attempted to organize again during the war. The men who assembled at Ramsour's Mill to resume their allegiance to the British government were not marauders in search of plunder, nor violent men seeking revenge for injuries inflicted in border warfare; they were nearly all simple-minded, artless Germans, industrious, frugal, and honest citizens, who had never been in arms before nor suffered persecutions from the Whigs. They believed the representative of the army of Cornwallis, who informed them that the Royal authority had been reëstablished in the South, and they were confirmed in this by the accounts of the absolute subjection of South Carolina and Georgia and the example of leading citizens of those states who had "taken British protection." They came to renew their citizenship and allegiance as they thought duty and conscience required. Happy had it been for South Carolina had the Tories on her borders been so easily put down. But such was not the case. Her soil was to be drenched to a much greater degree in fratricidal blood.

¹ Graham's Narrative, *No. Ca.*, 1780-81 (Schenck), 51-62.



CHAPTER XXVII

1780

THAT there were great differences of sentiment in regard to the Revolution even among the people of the Low Country of South Carolina has abundantly appeared in the pages of this history. Friends and families were divided in opinion as to its cause, and still more so in regard to the course of events which had followed resulting in the Declaration of Independence. But these differences in the Low Country had caused little bloodshed by native Carolinians at the hands of each other. Few of the Tories in this section took up arms against their fellow-countrymen. In the new field of war, alas! as at Ramsour's Mill, the people who had not been interested in the questions which brought on the trouble were to fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor. The most dreadful internecine strife was now to rage throughout the country beyond the falls of the rivers. The Scotchmen in Charlestown—especially the Scotch merchants, had almost unanimously opposed the Revolution; and so had the many Scotch traders in the Piedmont region. The Scotchmen in Charlestown, however, contented themselves with passive resistance to the Revolutionary party until the fall of the town, and then did little more than congratulate Sir Henry Clinton upon his victory over their rebellious fellow-townsmen; but in the Up Country they rose with the advance of the British and with heroism and determination took part in the war.

It would be well if the historian was bound to add nothing more in regard to their conduct; but truth requires the statement that the heroism of these people in maintaining their loyalty to their King was tarnished by deeds of cruelty and bloodthirstiness. It will indeed appear, as we follow the fortunes of the war in their section, that South Carolina experienced all the dire effects which from civil discords flow.¹

Before Tarleton had overtaken Buford the Tories in this section had begun to gather and organize. As early as the 26th of May — that is, three days before the massacre in the Waxhaws, a party of them had collected at Mobley's Meeting-house, about six miles west of Winnsboro in the present county of Fairfield; to meet this Colonel William Bratton of York and Captain John McClure of Chester gathered the Whigs and defeated and dispersed them. A similar uprising at Beckham's Old Field in the vicinity of Fishing Creek, in what is now Chester County, had been put down with equal ease, the Rev. John Simpson, then the Presbyterian minister of the congregation in that neighborhood, being one of the principal movers in the affair. We have no account of the casualties on either side of these affairs.

But though Colonel Bratton took so decided and active a part in dispersing the Tories at Mobley's Meeting-house before Buford's defeat, he appears to have hesitated after that event to advise the people to further resistance. Colonel William Hill, who shall hereafter frequently appear as a gallant officer under Sumter, in a narrative of the campaign in 1780² giving an account of the condition of affairs in the New Acquisition, as the present County of York was then known, states that Bratton and Watson, the two mili-

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 537.

² Sumter MSS., vol. I.

tia colonels in that district, called a meeting at Bullock's Creek Meeting-house to which they gave their opinion that any further opposition to the British would avail nothing, and declared that they could have nothing more to say to them as officers, and advised that each one must do the best he could for himself. Colonel Bratton, however, himself, went to Sumter's camp and soon was actually engaged. A commission was sent from the meeting at Bullock's Creek to Lord Rawdon, who was then across the Catawba, in the Waxhaws; and the meeting adjourned to Hill's Iron Works on Allison Creek, not far from the Catawba, to receive the report. There the person sent returned and exhibited his commission under Lord Rawdon's seal, empowering him to take submissions and to give paroles and protections to all that chose to become British subjects.¹ The commissioner proceeded to read a proclamation of his lordship's asserting that Congress had given up the two Southern States and would not contend further for them; that General Washington's army was reduced to a small number of men, with which he had fled to the mountains. At this point Colonel Hill interrupted the commissioner, took the stand, and addressed the people. He told them that he was happy to have it in his power to inform them that both statements of the proclamation were false, and made only to deceive and intimidate the people; that, so far from these statements being true, Congress had come to a resolution not to give up any of the States, and that General Washington was in fact in a more prosperous way than he had been for some time; so much so that he had sent an officer with a considerable army, which was then on the march to the relief of the Southern States. He reminded them that they had all taken an oath to defend

¹ Who this person was is not mentioned, nor have we been able to ascertain.

and maintain the independence of the State to the utmost of their power; that if they could not raise a force to meet the foe they had one open side and could keep together and go into North Carolina, meet their friends there, and return with them to their State. This address produced a reaction; there was a visible animation in the countenances of the citizens, says Hill, then despondency was dispelled, and Rawdon's commissioner disappeared with his proclamation and protections, fearing the resentment of the people.

The meeting then proceeded to organize a force, and, upon a ballot, Colonel Hill and a young man by the name of Andrew Neel were chosen Colonels. A camp was formed, and the American standard raised. Around this little band men from Georgia as well as South Carolina gathered, and in a short time quite a respectable body was formed.

Colonel Neel had formerly commanded the militia between the Enoree and Tyger rivers, in what is now Spartanburg County, and had been compelled to fly from the neighborhood, which was strongly loyal to the King; and after Sir Henry Clinton's proclamation requiring active service of the militia in the Royal cause, his command was given to our old acquaintance Matthew Floyd.¹ Colonel Floyd was at this time recruiting in the western part of York for the garrison at Rocky Mount. Neel, who now had a force with which to act, determined to put a stop to this. Taking with him all the men but about twelve or fifteen, left to keep the camp, he started in pursuit of Floyd, but was too late. Floyd with his recruits had escaped him.

On learning of the affair at Fishing Creek, Lieutenant Colonel Turnbull, who was in command of the post at

¹ *Life of Greene*, Johnson, vol. I, 292; *Steadman's Hist. Am. War*, vol. II, 200.

Rocky Mount, sent out Captain Huck with a detachment of thirty-five dragoons of the legion, twenty mounted infantry of the New York Volunteers, and about sixty Tory militia to investigate.¹ This Captain Christian Huck, who in a short career was to become notorious for his cruelties and violence, was an American — a lawyer of Philadelphia — who had gone to the British at New York and joined Tarleton when he was ordered to the South.²

The Rev. John Simpson, a Presbyterian minister of Irish descent, a native of New Jersey, had, some years before, succeeded the Rev. William Richardson in charge of the congregations of Upper and Lower Fishing Creek. He was an ardent Whig, and was regarded as the head of the party who had broken up the assemblies of the Tories both at Beckham's Old Field and at Mobley's Meeting-house. On Sunday morning, June 11, Huck and his party took their way to the church, where they expected to find the pastor with his assembled congregation, determined, as was believed at the time, to burn both the church and the people by way of warning to other "disturbers of the King's peace." The pastor had fortunately escaped. The Friday before he had shouldered his rifle and taken the field, joining Captain John McClure, one of the young men of his congregation, who was then with Sumter across the State line. On their way to the church the British killed, with circumstances of great atrocity, William Strong, an inoffensive and pious young man, who was, at the time of their assault upon him, reading his Bible. Mrs. Simpson, the wife of the pastor, while sitting at her breakfast table, heard the report of the gun which killed young Strong and announced the approach of the enemy. The church was but a short distance from the dwelling-house of the minister. Huck's party went

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 93.

² *Am. Loyalists* (Sabine), 371.

first to the house. Mrs. Simpson, seeing their approach, fled with her four children and concealed herself in an orchard. Huck's party rifled the house of everything valuable, destroyed the bedding, and, after taking all the clothing and other articles they fancied, set fire to the house, which was soon burned to the ground, together with a valuable library of books and important manuscripts which were in Mr. Simpson's study.¹

Huck then advanced to Hill's Iron Works, where the meeting told of above had taken place. These works were of great importance to the Whigs, for in them Colonel Hill was casting cannon and ordnance for their use, and they were also the only dependence of the farmers for forty or fifty miles around for the manufacture of their agricultural implements. Huck destroyed everything he could not carry away. He burned the forge, furnace, grist and saw mills, together with all the buildings, even the negro huts, and carried off with him about ninety negroes.² From the iron works he retired to White's Mills on Fishing Creek in what is now Chester County, about six miles below the York County line. Here he remained, desolating the country around and committing many outrages on inoffensive inhabitants.

In the meanwhile, Sumter having obtained from the authorities in North Carolina the wagons, horses, and provisions taken from the Tories at Ramsour's Mill, had moved into South Carolina and established a camp on Clem's Creek in what is now Lancaster County, just below the North Carolina line.³ Here he was joined by detachments of the Whigs, — volunteers under Colonels Hill and Neel from York, Richard Hampton from the Tyger River,

¹ Howe's *Hist. Presbyterian Church*, 511.

² Sumter MSS., vol. I, Hill's Narrative.

³ *Ibid.*



Spartanburg, Captain Samuel Hammond, Colonel Elijah Clarke of Georgia, and others who had passed by different routes through the upper part of the State, eluding the British outposts.¹

Soon after the establishment of their camp, Colonels Hill and Neel with 133 men recrossed the Catawba into York to reënforce their party as well with men as with provisions. Hill was now confirmed in the rumor of the destruction of his iron works and learned that Huck had sometime before summoned the men of the neighborhood to meet him, stating that "he would put them in the King's peace," that he had harangued those who had obeyed his summons on the certainty of his Majesty's reducing the colonies to obedience, and had used on the occasion the most blasphemous language, saying that God Almighty had become a rebel, but that if there were twenty gods on that side they would all be conquered. This foolish as well as impious language made a deep impression on the people to whom it was addressed, offending alike their religious and patriotic sentiments, and encouraging them in a belief that they would be made instruments in the hands of the Almighty to punish this wickedness and blasphemy.²

Besides Bratton, McClure, Hill, and Neel, another patriot now appeared who was to render singular service in the partisan warfare now inaugurated. Edward Lacey the father and Edward Lacey the son, of English descent, had removed from Pennsylvania to South Carolina. Edward Lacey the son had run away from his father in 1755, when but thirteen years of age, and joined Braddock in his unfortunate expedition, serving as a packhorse rider and driver. He again left his father at sixteen years of

¹ Sumter MSS., Hill's Narrative ; Johnson's *Traditions*, 341.

² Sumter MSS., Hill's Narrative.

age, and emigrated to this section of South Carolina with the Adairs. In 1775 he had been elected Captain of a volunteer company; in 1776 served under Williamson in his Cherokee expedition, and in Howe's Florida campaign; and when the Declaration of Independence was received, by Williamson's appointment he had read it to the troops. "Thank God," he had exclaimed, as he finished its reading, "we can now act on the offensive as well as the defensive." His father, who had followed him to South Carolina just before the commencement of the Revolution, was on the contrary an uncompromising Tory.

Colonel Turnbull had ordered Huck with the cavalry under his command to proceed to the frontier of the province, collecting all the royal militia on his march, and with these forces "to push the rebels." Huck had commenced his advance, and on his way stopped at Mrs. McClure's plantation, where they plundered and destroyed everything. Mrs. McClure's son James and her son-in-law Edward Martin were caught in the act of melting down their mother's pewter dishes and moulding bullets with the metal. They were made prisoners and ordered to be hung the next day. Mrs. McClure herself was struck by Huck with the flat of the sword. Her daughter Mary had fortunately succeeded in evading the British soon after their arrival, and rode to Sumter's camp, where she informed her brothers, John and Hugh, of what the British were doing and of their number. Colonel William Bratton and Captain John McClure set out that evening with 150 volunteers, and after a ride of thirty miles reached the neighborhood. In the meanwhile Lacey had also beat up the country for volunteers, and Hill and Neel, hearing of the intended attack upon Huck's corps, joined their forces, so that the patriots now had more than 500 men, with whom they determined to drive Huck out of the settlement.

Their plan was to steal a march by night upon the Royalists, who were supposed to have returned to White's Mills. The whole party accordingly assembled at sundown on July 11 in the neighborhood, and, forming themselves into parties, marched toward the Mills in perfect order. Before reaching the Mills, however, Captain McClure, who had preceded to reconnoitre, ascertained that Huck had on the same day, the 11th of July, advanced his whole body to Bratton's plantation, which was situated in the present county of York, about six miles above the Chester line, a distance of about twelve miles from White's Mills. The leaders and men in these parties were all alike volunteers, without commissions or authority. To decide, therefore, upon any movement consultations were necessary, and in these consultations all appear to have taken part. It being decided by a vote to advance, some mistake in orders occurring caused confusion and excitement, whereupon 150 men mounted their horses, and never stopped till they reached Charlotte, North Carolina, a distance of forty miles. A second consultation was then held, and it being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to pursue Huck with those who remained, now about 350, and surprise him before day. On their way they were warned by old Mr. William Adair, with whom Lacey had come to the State, that Huck had near one thousand British soldiers with him, who had taken every eatable on his plantation, and left him "not meal enough to make himself a hoe-cake." Lacey only replied to his old friend that they would make the British pay for all before sunrise. Two of Adair's sons, William and John, were with Lacey at the time. A most interesting incident now took place, strongly illustrating the divided sentiments of the community. On the way the Whigs were obliged to pass the farm where lived Edward Lacey, the father and

Tory. The son knew his father to be as determined as himself, and to be as devoted to the King as he was to the cause of independence, and he did not hesitate as to his course. He detailed four men to guard his father all night, and to tie him if necessary in order to prevent his going to the enemy and giving them notice of the attack. But old Lacey was as alive to the situation as his son. By some artifice he eluded the guard and started for Huck's camp, only two miles from his residence; fortunately, before he had gone two hundred yards he was overtaken, brought back, and actually tied in his bed till the next morning.

Huck, having arrived with his whole party during the day of the 11th, rudely entered Colonel Bratton's house and ordered Mrs. Bratton to provide a repast for himself and his troopers; he demanded also that she should inform him where her husband was. "In Sumter's army," promptly replied the heroic woman. Huck, finding threats unavailing, then attempted to conciliate her, and proposed that if she would get her husband to come in and join the Royalists, he should have a commission in the Royal service. Mrs. Bratton replied, with continued firmness, that she would rather, if necessary, that he should die in the defence of his State. Upon this reply one of Huck's troopers attempted to take her life with a reaping-hook which was hanging near. He was, however, prevented, not by Huck, but by another officer.

Approaching to near where they supposed the British encamped, the Whigs dismounted, tied their horses, and again counted their men. Ninety had fallen off since they left the Mills. Although they now had not more than two hundred and sixty men left, they still determined to attack the Royalists before daylight. But the British had again moved. They had left Bratton's and encamped at Williamson's plantation, on a creek about a



quarter of a mile farther off. The Whigs halted in a thicket to rest; but Bratton did not avail himself of this indulgence. The British campfires were within sight of his own house, the residence of his family. He first pushed on to ascertain its safety, — the British had fortunately postponed its destruction until the next day, — and then turned to reconnoitre Huck's encampment, to ascertain where the sentinels were stationed and where the horses were picketed. In doing this he passed through their line of sentinels. A consultation was had, and it was agreed that the men should be divided into two parties: one party to be led by Colonels Bratton and Neel, and the other by Colonel Lacey, the parties to approach from different directions. Huck had sentinels placed along the road in front of the house, while the soldiers not on duty were asleep in their tents, and one officer in the house. Huck, it is evident, had not considered himself in any danger. His men were very carelessly posted; no pickets were advanced, and no patrols sent out.¹

The Whigs moved to the attack just as the morning of the 12th began to dawn; they approached the enemy in silence, cut off the troopers from their picketed horses, and opened fire about seventy-five paces from where the British were lying. The fence on the lane gave the Whigs some little protection against the enemy's musketry, and afforded them a good rest for their rifles, with which they took unerring and deadly aim. Three times the British charged with their bayonets, but were forced to fall back from the galling and destructive fire of the American rifles. Huck appears at first to have considered the affair so small that he did not get up out of bed; but at last, aroused to his danger, he hurriedly arose and, without his coat, mounted a horse, and while trying

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 93.

to rally his men was shot and fell dead. Upon his fall the word, "Boys, take the fence and every man his own commander," was passed along the Whig ranks, and no sooner said than done; the Whigs leaped the fence and rushed upon the enemy, who, after a futile resistance, threw down their arms and fled in great confusion. A few on their knees begged for quarter. And this was allowed, notwithstanding Tarleton's precedent at the Waxhaws, except to one Ferguson, a Tory, who, it was believed, had commanded the squad that killed young Strong a short time before. The Whigs mounted their horses and pursued the flying Royalists for thirteen or fourteen miles, wreaking their vengeance and retaliating heavily for the cruelties and atrocities which had been committed. The battle had lasted about one hour; the Whigs had one man killed, the British between thirty and forty, and about fifty wounded. In the rout and pursuit of the British, Colonel Bratton's house became the scene of action, and when the family came out from their hiding-place, the dead and wounded were lying around it and in the lower rooms. To these suffering enemies Mrs. Bratton paid the kindest and most assiduous attentions, feeding and nursing them, and supplying their wants to the best of her ability. The officer who had saved her life in the morning, having been taken prisoner, requested to be brought to her, confident of her gratitude; and he was not disappointed—he was protected from injury and hospitably entertained. This noble-minded lady, says the author from whom this account is taken, an example of female patriotism and heroism in South Carolina, in the hour of danger risked her own life and all that was dear to her on earth rather than ask her husband to desert his country or shrink from his duty. In the hour of victory she

remembered mercy, and interposed to save and comfort the unfortunate among her foes.¹

One of the happiest results of the victory was the release of James McClure and Edward Martin, who during the action had been confined — tied in an outhouse, a corner, awaiting their execution the next morning. But one of the Whigs was killed — his name was Campbell. Huck was killed by one of two brothers, John or Thomas Campbell, who both were foremost in the action. It is uncertain which fired the fatal and decisive shot. The fight was made by the patriots of this immediate neighborhood. Besides the Brattons, of whom there were three brothers, there were two brothers named Ross, two named Hanna, and two Adair, one of whom became afterwards distinguished; three named Gill and three Rainey, also four sons of John Moore and five sons of James Williamson, around whose house the battle was fought. The people of this neighborhood generally were, however, probably not more united in sentiment than elsewhere in the State. There were Tory families upon whom the victors billeted about fifty wounded of their enemies. These were attended by a physician who resided in the neighborhood. Many others of the wounded Tories escaped into the woods, and were afterward found dead.²

The battle at Williamson has been but little noticed by historians; but it was one of the turning-points in the Revolution. The affairs at Mobley's Meeting-house and Beckham's Old Field had indeed been uprisings of the people; but in them the Whigs had only been opposed to their own neighbors, like themselves unorganized and unarmed, and no blood, as far as we know, had been shed. Nor at Ramsour's Mill, where unfortunately there had been

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 339.

² *Life of General Edward Lacey*, 10.

great slaughter by kinsfolk, friends, and acquaintances, had there been any regularly organized forces. But in this battle British regulars, though few in number, had been routed and dispersed. It is true that Huck was not a British regular officer, nor a professional soldier, but an American loyalist. Still he wore the red coat of the British army and bore his Majesty's commission in the British legion, which in three months' service in South Carolina had already made itself famous and equally dreaded and hated by the people among whom their atrocities had been committed. That any of the merciless sabreurs of Monck's Corner, Lenuds's Ferry, and Waxhaws could themselves be surprised and cut to pieces alike aroused the courage and vengeance of those who had witnessed the sufferings of the cruel massacre of Huger's and Buford's men. But more than this, it committed these people to the cause of independence. There was now no longer time for consideration and discussion. They must take the field—if only for their own safety. It had the immediate effect, it was said, of adding six hundred men to Sumter's camp at Clem's Creek within a few days after the battle.¹ Among these was Lacey with a body he had collected.²

Captain Thomas Young, a soldier who took an active part in the bloody scenes which were now to follow, who was still living in 1847, relates in his memoirs two affairs which must have happened about this time, but of the exact dates of which there is uncertainty.

Colonel Thomas Brandon was encamped about five miles from the present town of Union, collecting forces for the approaching campaign and keeping a check upon the Tories. They had taken one Adam Steedham, a Tory, who, managing to escape, notified the Tories of Brandon's posi-

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 399.

² *Life of General Edward Lacey*, 11.



tion. Brandon was attacked by a large body of the enemy before day and completely routed. Captain Young lost a brother in this affair whom he vowed to avenge, and declares that he did so. Upon this he says he joined Brandon's party, and his first engagement was at a place known as Stallions,¹ in what is now York County.

Brandon, learning that a party of Tories were stationed at Stallions, took a detachment of about fifty Whigs to attack them. Before arriving at the house, which was fortified, Brandon divided his force into two parties. A Captain Love with a party of sixteen, of which the narrator was one, attacked the front, while Colonel Brandon with the remainder made a circuit to intercept those who should attempt to escape and to assail the rear. Mrs. Stallions was a sister of Captain Love, and on the approach of her brother she ran out and begged him not to fire upon the house. Running back to the house, as she sprang upon the doorstep, she fell, pierced by a ball shot at random through the opposite door. The Tories, attacked in front and rear, kept up for some time a fire upon their assailants. It was not long, however, before they raised a flag and surrendered. The loss of the Tories was two killed, four wounded, and twenty-eight prisoners. The prisoners were sent to Charlotte, North Carolina. The victory was gained at bitter loss to Love, who mingled his own tears with those of his Tory brother-in-law.²

It will be recollected that while the main body of the British army had proceeded to Camden, two other divisions after leaving Charlestown had separated at Dorchester, one under Lieutenant Colonel Browne moving up the Savannah River to Augusta, and the other under Lieutenant Colonel Balfour passing along the western bank of

¹ Probably Stallings. See *Georgia Scenes* (A. B. Longstreet).

² Johnson's *Traditions*, 446-448.

the Congaree to Ninety-Six. It is time now to recur to the movements of these parties under Browne and Balfour between the Broad and the Savannah.

When Lord Cornwallis crossed the Santee at Lenuds's Ferry he detached Colonel Ferguson with his corps of American volunteers, 100 to 200 men, to join Colonel Balfour at Ninety-Six, where he arrived on the 22d of June. Colonel Ferguson and his friend Major Hanger seem to have had a special commission from Sir Henry Clinton, independently of Colonel Balfour. Colonel Ferguson was a remarkable man. A Scotchman of excellent birth, the son of Lord Pitfour, at fifteen years of age he had entered the army as a Cornet of Dragoons and had served with distinction in the wars in Flanders and Germany. Then, transferred to the Seventieth Regiment of Foot stationed in the Caribbee Islands, he had performed important service in quieting an insurrection of the Caribs on the island of St. Vincent. When the disputes between the mother country and her colonies were verging toward hostilities, the boasted skill of the Americans in the use of the rifle was regarded as an object of terror to the British troops. These rumors excited the genius of Ferguson, and he invented a breech-loading rifle, with which he performed some most extraordinary feats of practice at Woolwich in June, 1776, in the presence of the Master of Ordnance, General Amherst, and other officers of high rank. And on one occasion his Majesty George III himself had honored him with his presence at an exhibition of his skill. He was regarded as the best rifle-shot in the British army, if not the best marksman living, excepting, possibly, his associate, Major George Hanger. Anxious to take part in the American war, he joined Sir Henry Clinton, and was placed at the head of a corps of riflemen picked from the different regiments, and soon



after participated in the battle of Brandywine on the 11th of September, 1777, in which he rendered the most important service. Washington, it is said, owed his life at the battle of Germantown to Ferguson's ignorance of his position, or to his humanity, — the account differs as to which, — having been repeatedly within the range of his unerring rifle. When the British evacuated Philadelphia in June, 1778, Captain Ferguson accompanied the retiring forces and of course participated in the battle of Monmouth on the way. He it was who commanded the expedition which surprised and cut to pieces the infantry of Pulaski's legion at Little Egg Harbor on the 14th of October of that year. During the northern campaign of 1779 he had been engaged in several predatory excursions along the coast and on the Hudson. When Sir Henry Clinton fitted out his expedition against Charlestown at the close of 1779, he very naturally selected Major Ferguson to share in the important enterprise. A corps of three hundred men called the American Volunteers¹ was assigned to his command, he having the choice of both officers and soldiers, and for the special service he had been given the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. At his request Major Hanger's corps of two hundred Hessians were joined to his own. Colonel Ferguson's command, as has been seen, formed a part of the troops under General Patterson which had joined Sir Henry Clinton on the

¹ In *The Winning of the West* Governor Roosevelt says in a note that, though called volunteers, this body was simply a regular regiment raised in America instead of England. Ferguson himself always spoke of them as regulars. The British, says Roosevelt, gave an absurd number of titles to the various officers; thus Ferguson was a Brigadier General of Militia, Lieutenant Colonel of Volunteers, a Major in the army, etc. (Vol. II, 243.) But the same system prevailed in our own army during the late Spanish war, and does to-day in the Philippines, officers holding at the same time different ranks in the regular and the volunteer lines.

Stono on the 25th of March, and had supported Tarleton in his attack upon Huger at Monck's Corner on the 12th of April. Ferguson, says Irving, was a fit associate of Tarleton in hardy, scrambling partisan enterprise, equally intrepid and determined, but cooler and more open to impulses of humanity.¹ But Ferguson, besides his superior humanity, was much more than a mere soldier. His characteristics were more those of Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell, under whose command the Seventy-first Regiment had first come to the South, and whose wise and conciliatory conduct after his defeat of Howe before Savannah had effectually secured to his King the fruits of his conquest and had permanently reestablished the Royal authority in Georgia. Major Hanger, Colonel Ferguson's companion, was a man of different character, dissolute in his habits and reckless in his conduct, but, like Ferguson, a good soldier.² These men Sir Henry Clinton directed to repair to the interior settlements and jointly or separately to organize, muster, and regulate all volunteer corps

¹ Irving's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 51.

² George Hanger, fourth Baron of Coleraine, was the youngest son of Gabriel Hanger, created Baron of Coleraine in the peerage of Ireland. Educated at Eton and Göttingen, on January 31, 1771, was gazetted an Ensign, First Regiment of Foot Guards; resigned, and left the Guards; appointed by Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel captain in the Hessian Jäger Corps, February, 1776; sailed for America, where he served throughout the war; was aide-de-camp to Sir Henry Clinton during the siege of Charlestown. Upon his return to England was with Tarleton, Lord Rawdon, then Earl of Moira, and Sir John McMahon (of whom later), one of the Prince of Wales's (George IV) fast set, and even in that circle was famous for his eccentricity and profligacy. Losing the countenance of his royal master because of the freedom with which he treated him, he was an inmate of the King's Bench Prison in 1798-99. He was the author of several works. *The Life and Opinions of Colonel George Hanger* appeared in London in 1801. On the second page of that unsavory book is a portrait of Hanger, with cocked hat and sword, suspended on a gibbet. In the second volume of this work he announced

and inspect the quantity of grain and number of cattle, etc., belonging to the inhabitants, and report to Lord Cornwallis, who would be left in command of the southern province. The powers of their commissions were very extensive. It authorized them to receive the submission of the people, administer oaths of fealty, and exact pledges of Royal service; but it extended still farther.¹ No authority had really existed in this part of the country since Lord William Campbell had abandoned the government in 1775. It has been seen how little impression William Henry Drayton's mission had been able to make upon the people in Colonel Fletchall's district between the Saluda and the Broad. They had never accepted either the Association or the new government established in 1776; and none other existed. Large civil powers were therefore also added to the commissions of Ferguson and Hanger, even authority to perform the marriage service. The commissioners did not establish any civil government, but they thoroughly organized the loyal militia, forming them into six battalions.²

After a fortnight's rest at Ninety-Six Colonel Ferguson advanced some sixteen miles, and selected a good location on Little River, where he erected some field works, while most of his provincials pushed on to the Fair Forest region. This camp was at the plantation of Colonel James Williams, in what is now Laurens County, near the Newberry line, where the British and Tories long maintained a post, a part of the time under General Cuning- the singular prophecy that one of these days the Northern and Southern powers will fight as vigorously against each other as they both have united to do against the British. Vol. II, 425-429.

¹ This account of Colonel Ferguson is taken from Draper's *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, Chapter III. See also Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West*, vol. II, 242.

² *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 143.

ham, till they evacuated Ninety-Six the following year.¹ Major Hanger did not remain long with Colonel Ferguson in the Little River region, for early in August he was transferred to Tarleton's legion as Major.

"We come not," declared Ferguson, "to make war on women and children, but to relieve their distresses." He would sit down for hours and converse with the country people on the state of public affairs, and point out to them from his view the ruinous effect of disloyalty. He was as indefatigable in training them to his way of thinking as he was in instructing them in military exercises. The condescension on his part was regarded as wonderful in a king's officer, and very naturally went far to secure the respect and obedience of all who came within the sphere of his almost magic influence.²

To Colonel Ferguson's standard, while encamped at Little River, the Tories of the country, whose spirit had been kept up by the Cuninghams, Fletchall, Robinson, and Pearis, now flocked in large numbers. Companies and regiments were organized and many officers commissioned for the Royal service. David Fanning, the notorious

¹ Draper fixes the location of Williams's plantation as about a mile west of Little River, and between that stream and Mud Lick Creek on the Old Island Ferry Road followed by General Greene when he retreated from Ninety-Six in 1781. Ferguson's camp was near the intersection of a road leading to Laurens Court House, about six miles distant — MS. letters, he says, of General A. C. Garlington, July 19 and 20, 1880, on authority of Colonel James W. Watts, a descendant of Colonel Williams, and Major T. K. Vance and others. D. R. Crawford, of Martin's Depot, South Carolina, states that three miles above the old Williams place, on the west side of Little River, opposite the old Mellin store, must have been an encampment, as old gun barrels and gun locks have been found there. *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 69; *Tarleton's Campaigns*, 80, 87, 100.

² Draper, *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 72, 73; quoting *Political Magazine* (March, 1781), 125.

North Carolina Tory, secured from Colonel Ferguson commissions for no less than sixty-two persons. But it was not only the youthful Loyalists, whose zeal and ambition prompted them to take up arms, who found a warm reception in the British camp; but the desperate, the idle, the vindictive, who sought plunder or revenge, were alike welcomed; but these were disciplined by him and organized, drilled, and fitted for active service. Ferguson's principal camp was at Little River, as just described, but he was constantly on the move scouring the country in front of the posts from Rocky Mount to Ninety-Six. However gentle and patient he was with the Loyalists and with those whom he hoped to win back to his Majesty's cause, to the avowed or known Rebels he was a bitter foe. Traversing principally the present counties of Newberry, Union, and Spartanburg, and sometimes crossing into Fairfield and Chester, he mercilessly plundered the Whigs of their cattle, horses, beds, wearing apparel, guns, and vegetables, even wresting rings from the fingers of the women. He believed as much in despoiling his enemies as Tarleton did in slaughtering them.

That Ferguson during the period he held command in the Up Country had been both untiring and successful is well attested by a report of Lord Cornwallis to the home government, August 20, 1780: "In the district of Ninety-Six," says his lordship, "by far the most populous and powerful of the province, Lieutenant Colonel Balfour by his great attention and diligence and by the active assistance of Major Ferguson, who was appointed Inspector General of the Militia of the Province by Sir Henry Clinton, had formed seven battalions of Militia consisting of about four thousand men, composed of persons well affected to the British government, which were so regulated that they could with ease furnish fifteen hundred

men at a short notice for the defence of the frontier or any other service.”¹

A singular exception to the general sentiment of the people in this section was a congregation of Presbyterians of the Fair Forest church, of which it was said that there was not a Tory among them. Of these Colonel John Thomas was one of the leaders. He was a native of Wales, but brought up in Chester County in Pennsylvania and removed to South Carolina. Before hostilities commenced he was residing upon Fair Forest Creek in the lower part of what is now Spartanburg County. He was one of the founders of the church and a militia captain and magistrate under the Royal government. Having resigned his Majesty's commission, he was elected Colonel of the regiment in the place of Fletchall when that officer refused to join the new government. After the fall of Charlestown he was, under Sir Henry Clinton's proclamation, thrown into confinement in violation of the parole he had given and the protection he had received. He had four sons in the rebel service, two of whom fell in the cause. John Thomas, Jr., succeeded his father in the command of the regiment and made his mark on many a well-fought field. The other son was a youth at the time of the war, but not too young to do some important service. He had also four daughters, each of whose husbands was a Whig and each ultimately held a commission in the field.

It happened that while Colonel John Thomas the elder, with two of his sons, was confined at Ninety-Six as a prisoner, Mrs. Thomas visited her husband and sons, and while there overheard two women in conversation, one remarking to the other, “On to-morrow the Loyalists intend to surprise the Rebels at Cedar Spring.” This was a camp in which Colonel John Thomas, Jr., her son, was organizing

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 142.

a body to join Sumter at Clem's Creek. Startled at this information, as she had two sons as well as many of her friends and neighbors in that camp, which was but a few miles beyond her own home, Mrs. Thomas determined at once to return and apprise them of the intended attack. This was on the 12th of July, the night on which Huck's party was cut to pieces at Williamson's plantation in York. She started early the next morning, the 13th, and reached Cedar Spring that evening in time to give her friends warning of the impending danger.

Colonel John Thomas, Jr., the son of the heroine of this story and of Colonel John Thomas the prisoner, who had succeeded his father in command of the Fair Forest Whigs, now headed the small band of some sixty in number encamped at the Cedar Spring. On receiving the timely intelligence of the intended attack, Colonel Thomas and his men, after a brief consultation, retired to a distance in rear of their campfires, and awaited the impending onset. The British enemy, one hundred and fifty strong, soon made their appearance, and rushed upon the camp, where they expected to find the luckless rebels profoundly enwrapped in slumber; but on the contrary they were wide awake and astonished their assailants with a volley of rifle balls. Several were slain and the rest routed. It was a short, quick, and decisive affair. It was fortunate for the Thomas party that the attack was made at night, as it prevented the enemy from discovering their own great superiority in numbers.¹

Ferguson now moved his posts, crossed the Enoree at Kelly's Ford, and for a time encamped in the fork at the plantation of Colonel James Lyles, who was then in the service with Sumter on the Catawba; and there, embody-

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 73-75; *Hist. Presbyterian Church* (Howe), vol. I, 533-534.

ing the Tories, he kept moving about the country and sending out his detachments in every direction. He marched into what is now Union County, camping on the south side of Tyger River about half a mile below Blackstock's Ford; thence passed into the settlement called "The Quaker Meadow," but since known as the Meadow Woods. Thence he moved up into the Fair Forest settlement. During this period of several weeks the Tories scoured all that region of country, plundering the people. The horses of Ferguson's men were turned loose into any fields of grain that might be most convenient. Foraging parties brought in cattle to camp for slaughter, or wantonly shot them down in the woods and left them. As many of the Whigs as could be found were apprehended, not even excepting those who had previously taken protection. But these were not many. Most of the Rebels at heart at this time capable of bearing arms were serving in Sumter's command, so that Ferguson had an excellent opportunity to drill his new recruits and support his men by pillaging the people.¹

Shortly after the fall of Charlestown, and before Colonel Browne had reached Augusta with his detachment, a party of Loyalists under the command of a Captain Hollingsworth was sent by McGirth, who was now commissioned as a Colonel in the Royal service, into the neighborhood of Captain McKoy in South Carolina, whose activity rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the British. The party murdered seventeen men on their farms in one or two days. The country exhibited a scene of ruin. All the movable property was plundered, and every house was burned. A flourishing country of thirty miles in length and ten in breadth was desolated. Disappointed in their expectations of getting possession of McKoy's person, they

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 77.

tortured his wife to extort from her a knowledge of the place of his concealment. The mode of inflicting the torture was by taking a flint out of a musket and putting her thumb in its place. Thus improvising a most effective thumbscrew, the screw was applied until the thumb was ready to burst. While under this newly invented species of torture, in addition to the questions put to her respecting her husband, she was required to disclose the secret deposit of her most valuable property, which they alleged had been removed and hidden in the woods. McKoy was afterward charged with cruelty toward the enemy by his own countrymen who were engaged in the same cause, but it is scarcely to be wondered at that he should have sought revenge for such barbarous treatment of his wife. Such atrocities upon the one side and the other did but provoke to others, and often to greater.¹

Colonel Elijah Clarke, a noted partisan of Georgia, now also appears on the frontier of South Carolina. A native of Virginia, he had first settled on the Pacolet, whence he pushed into what is now Wilkes County, Georgia, where he was settled when the Revolution began. When Georgia was overrun, Clarke refused to take protection, and with other patriots of that State determined to move into South Carolina, to join those who were gathering under Sumter. Some small parties had already left Georgia, and passing by the foot of the mountains, sought the camp of Colonel Charles McDowell, who was embodying a force on the southwestern border of North Carolina.

On the 11th of July, one hundred and forty men, well mounted and armed, met at Freeman's Fort in Georgia, and crossed the Savannah at a private ford six miles above Petersburg, about ten miles west of the present town of Abbeville. The British and Loyalists were found in force

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, 307.

in their front, and Colonel Clarke determined that it would be too hazardous to attempt in their face to pursue his intended route. The men who composed Clarke's command were volunteers, and, having left their own State, each man claimed the right of thinking and acting for himself. The dangers which were presented, and the ungovernable disposition of his men, induced Clarke to return to Georgia, temporarily to disperse and wait for more favorable intelligence, when he would make another attempt by passing near the foot of the mountains through Carolina. This plan was generally approved and a retreat was immediately commenced.

Colonel John Jones of Burke County, however, objected to the retreat and proposed to a few to leave the country at every hazard, and, by passing through the woods of South Carolina, to join the Continental army wherever it was to be found. Thirty-five men formed themselves into a company, appointed Jones their Captain and John Freeman Lieutenant, promising implicit obedience to their orders. They were fortunate in securing the services of Benjamin Lawrence, a good woodsman of South Carolina, well acquainted with the country, as their guide. In passing through the disaffected country they pretended to be a company of Loyalists engaged in the King's service, and in many instances were furnished with pilots upon that representation. When they had passed the headwaters of the Tyger River¹ one of the guides informed them that a party of Rebels had attacked some Loyalists the preceding night a short distance in front and defeated them. This was doubtless an allusion to the affair of Colonel

¹ Draper says that Jones's retreat crossed the headwaters of the Saluda (*King's Mountains and its Heroes*, 79), but this Landrum shows to have been a mistake. It was the headwaters of the Tyger, as stated in the text. *Colonial and Revolutionary Hist. of Upper So. Ca.* (Landrum), 116.

John Thomas, Jr., at Fair Forest, which has just been described. Jones thereupon expressed a wish to be conducted to the place, that he might join the Loyalists and have it in his power to take revenge for the blood of the King's subjects which had been shed. This the guide readily undertook to do, and about eleven o'clock, on the night of the 13th of July, Jones was led to the Royal party, where about forty were collected to pursue the Americans, who had retreated toward North Carolina. Jones at once made his dispositions to attack by surprise with twenty-two men, leaving the horses and baggage in charge of the remainder. Approaching the enemy, he found them in a state of self-security and generally asleep. On the first fire one of the enemy was killed and three were wounded. Thirty-two, including the wounded, surrendered and called for quarter. Jones ordered all the enemy's guns to be destroyed except such as would be useful to his men, paroled the prisoners, and took as many of the horses as they could carry away without incumbrance. The pilot did not discover his mistake until it was too late to prevent the consequences. After the skirmish was over the man was required to conduct Jones's party to Earle's Ford on Pacolet River, in what is now Spartanburg County, where he formed a junction with Colonel McDowell the next day.¹ Jones's party had had no rest for three days and nights; McDowell had also made a tedious march with his three hundred men, so that they were all in a very fatigued condition.²

Within striking distance of McDowell's camping ground,

¹ Draper, from whom we have taken the account of this affair, fails to locate the place where it occurred. Landrum places it at Gowen's Old Fort on the old Blackstock Road, near South Pacolet River. *Colonial and Revolutionary Hist. of Upper So. Ca.*, 117.

² McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, vol. II, 311.

some twenty miles in a nearly southern direction, was Prince's Fort,¹ originally a place of neighborhood resort in time of danger from Indians, on the settlement of the country some twenty years before. This fort, now occupied by a British and Tory force under Colonel Innes, was located upon a commanding height of land near the head of one of the branches of the North Fork of the Tyger River, seven miles north of west from the present city of Spartanburg. Innes, unapprised of McDowell's approach, detached Major Dunlap with seventy dragoons, accompanied by Colonel Ambrose Mills with a party of Loyalists, in pursuit of Jones, of whose audacious operations he had just received intelligence. McDowell's camp was on rising ground on the eastern side of the North Pacolet, just across the dividing line between the two States in the present county of Polk in North Carolina. Dunlap reached the vicinity of McDowell's camp late at night, and, supposing it to consist of the Georgians only, commenced crossing the river, which was narrow at that point, when an American sentinel fled to the camp and gave the first notice of the enemy's presence. Dunlap and his men rushed into the camp with drawn swords when but few of the Americans were awake. The position of the Georgians in the encampment exposed them to the first attack, in consequence of which they sustained very great loss in proportion to their numbers. Colonel Jones received eight cuts on the head with a sabre. Freeman rallied the remainder and joined Major Singleton, who had retreated about one

¹ One of the old forts or stockades, a rallying point in times of danger. It was circular in shape, built of heavy timbers, from twelve to fifteen feet high, surrounded by a ditch, the dirt from which was thrown against the walls, secured in front by an abatis. This fort took its name from Mr. William Prince, who lived near it. *Colonial and Revolutionary Hist. of Upper So. Ca.* (Landrum), 31; *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 80.



hundred yards behind a fence. McDowell formed the main body on Singleton's right. An advance was ordered, when the enemy retreated across the river, which was fordable in many places, enabling them to retire without much loss. Of the Americans, eight were killed and thirty wounded. The enemy's loss was not known beyond that of a single wounded man left on the ground.

Before sunrise the next morning fifty-two of the most active men, including Freeman and fourteen of his party, mounted upon the best horses in camp, were ordered to pursue the retreating foe under the command of Captain Edward Hampton.¹ After a rapid march of two hours, the enemy were overtaken fifteen miles away, attacked, and completely routed. Eight of them were killed at the first fire, and Dunlap, unable to rally, made a precipitate retreat in which several more of his men were killed and wounded. The pursuit was continued within a few yards of the British fort, in which there were three hundred fresh men. Hampton returned to camp at two o'clock, and brought with him thirty-five horses with dragoon equipage and a considerable portion of the enemy's baggage, without the loss of a man.²

The whole frontier of South Carolina was now ablaze. There were no Continental troops in the State. There was not even an officer with a regular commission except Davie, who held one as Major under the State of North Carolina, but who commanded only a volunteer corps furnished and maintained by himself. But resistance had sprung up in

¹ A brother of Colonels Wade, Richard, and Henry Hampton. He was killed the ensuing October, at or near Fair Forest Creek, in the bosom of his family, by Bill Cunningham's notorious bloody scout. He was in the prime of life, and in his death his country lost a bold cavalier. He was the idol of his family and friends. *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 83.

² McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, vol. II, 311, 312; *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 80-83.

the advice of the British posts from the people themselves. They had risen and attacked the British outposts along the whole line in what is now the counties of Chester, York, and Spartanburg. There had been engagements upon four successive nights, in each one of which the Whigs had been victorious. At Williamson's and Bratton's plantations in York they had attacked and destroyed Huck and his party on the 12th of July. Colonel John Thomas, Jr., had defeated the attack made upon his camp at Cedar Spring in Spartanburg on the night of the 13th. Then Colonel Jones had surprised the Loyalists at Gowen's Old Fort near the South Pacolet in the same county on the night of the 14th; and finally the attack of Dunlap on McDowell's camp on the night of the 15th had been avenged by Hampton on the morning of the 16th. Of these engagements, it is true, none could be described as a great battle, but the British had, in less than a week, lost more than a hundred men killed and wounded, while the loss of the Americans had not amounted to half that number.



CHAPTER XXVIII

1780

THE conduct of the British commanders within their lines was also driving men from desperation into the American camps. Forgetting, says Ramsay, their experience in the Northern States, they believed the submission of the inhabitants to be sincere ; making no allowance for that propensity in human nature which leads mankind, when in the power of others, to frame their intelligence with more attention to what is agreeable than to what is true, the British for some time conceived that they had little to fear on the southern side of Virginia. When experience convinced them of the fallacy of their hopes, they were transported with indignation against the inhabitants. Without taking any share of the blame to themselves for their policy in constraining men to an involuntary submission, they charged them with studied duplicity and treachery. A matter which added greatly to their rage and indignation, and, no doubt, to their apprehensions as well, was the fact that there were great desertions from the Royal army, and especially from Lord Rawdon's pet regiment, the Royal Volunteers of Ireland, which he had himself organized in Philadelphia. These deserters had no difficulty in concealing themselves among the people around the garrisons. Lord Rawdon, whose temper was soured by disappointment, and was in great anger against the new subjects as well for their unmeaning submissions as for their conniving at a practice so injurious to the Royal interests, on the 1st of July addressed a letter to Rowland Rugeley,

now a Major of British militia near the headquarters in Camden, in which he stated that so many deserters from his army had passed with impunity through the district under Rugeley's command, that he must necessarily suspect the inhabitants to have connived at, if not facilitated, their escape. If attachment to their Sovereign, he wrote, would not move the country people to check a crime so detrimental to his Majesty's service, it must be his care to urge them to their duty as good subjects by using invariable severity toward every one who should show so criminal a neglect of the public interest. He therefore instructed Rugeley to signify to all within the limits of his command his firm determination that, if any person should meet a soldier straggling without a written pass beyond the pickets, and should not do his utmost to secure him or should not spread an alarm for that purpose, or if any person should give shelter to soldiers straggling, or should serve them as a guide, or should furnish them with passes or any other assistance, the persons so offending might assure themselves of rigorous punishment, either by whipping, imprisonment, or by being sent to serve his Majesty in the West Indies, according as he should think the degree of criminality might require. Lord Rawdon also instructed Rugeley to offer the inhabitants ten guineas for the head of any deserter belonging to the Volunteers of Ireland, and five guineas only if they brought him in alive. They should likewise be rewarded, though not to that amount, for each deserter belonging to any other regiment which they might secure.

In addition to this Lord Rawdon, on the first rumor of an advancing American army, called on the inhabitants in and near Camden to take up arms against these approaching countrymen, and confined in jail those who refused. In the midst of summer upward of 160 persons were shut up

in a small prison, and 20 or 30 of them, citizens of the most respectable character, were loaded with irons. Mr. James Bradley, Mr. Strother, Colonel Few, Mr. Kershaw, Captain Boykin, Colonel Alexander, Mr. Irvin, Mr. Winn, Colonel Hunter, and Captain John Chesnut were among those subjected to these indignities. The last of these gentlemen, though taken in Charlestown, and entitled, therefore, to the security of his person and property by solemn capitulation, was despoiled of \$5000 worth of indigo and chained to the floor for a considerable time, on the charge, by one of his slaves, that he was corresponding with the Americans.¹

This conduct of the British authorities had the very opposite effect from that which was intended. Instead of intimidating the people, it aroused every sentiment of indignation and revenge. Gentlemen and men of character, however well disposed to his Majesty's cause they may have been, resented the threat of being whipped or sent to serve with outcasts in a foreign service, unless they would turn detectives and constables to keep the Royal troops in their ranks. They preferred open war and at once accepted it. If Lord Rawdon was to hold them as violators of their paroles and oaths of allegiance at the whispering of their own slaves, they had better at once renounce the pledge they had given, and take their lives and their honors in their hands while they might yet strike a blow in their defence. Acting upon this impulse and sentiment Colonel John Lisle,² formerly Lieutenant Colonel of the militia

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, 131-135.

² In the *Annals of Newberry*, Judge O'Neill, in a note to page 191, says, speaking of the Lyles family: "In Tarleton's *Campaigns in the South*, page 93, he speaks of one *Lisle*, who was from the District between Enoree and Tyger rivers, being banished to the islands; returning, he took place in the regiment formerly commanded by Colonel Neel, then by Colonel Floyd, in the British interest, and carried it all off and joined Sumter. Who the *Lisle* spoken of by Tarleton may be, is uncertain." John

regiment between the Enoree and Tyger rivers under Colonel Fletchall, who had been captured and sent to the islands on the seacoast, and then required by Sir Henry Clinton's proclamation of the 3d of June to exchange his parole for a certificate of allegiance, having returned home and obtained a command under Colonel Floyd, the British commandant of militia, had the address as soon as the battalion of militia was supplied with arms, to carry it off in a body to Colonel Neel, who was now with Sumter at Clem's Creek. The British historians¹ speak of this action of Lisle as treacherous; but if it was so was it not induced, if not justified, by Clinton's faithless conduct in forcing him to exchange a parole as a prisoner of war—owing his allegiance to the American cause, but agreeing not to serve against his Majesty during the war unless exchanged or recaptured—for an oath not merely of neutrality while a prisoner, but of change of allegiance? However this question of ethics should be decided, certain it is that the faithless and cruel conduct of the British commanders within the lines drove into the American ranks many men who otherwise would have remained quietly at home as good subjects of his Majesty.

After the battle of Ramsour's Mill on the 18th of June, General Rutherford had marched toward the Yadkin to put down a body of Tories who were assembling under Colonel Bryan, while Major Davie and his mounted force were ordered to take position to check the foraging parties of the British across the line between the two States. Davie preceded Sumter, crossed the line, and took position on the north side of Waxhaw Creek, some fourteen miles

Lisle was Lieutenant Colonel in 1775 of the Upper Saluda Regiment, of which Fletchall was Colonel. See *ante*, page 12, note. See also Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. I, 319.

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 93-126; Steadman's *Am. War*, 200.



south of Clem's Creek. Here he was in the neighborhood in which he had been reared and in which he knew every road and by-path, and which was now to be the scene of his most brilliant exploits. He was joined by Major Crawford with some South Carolina volunteers and thirty-four Indian warriors of the Catawba under their chief New River, and some North Carolina militia under Colonel Heaggins. From this point Davie at once followed up the blow given at Williamson's.

When Lord Rawdon fell back from the Waxhaws he established a post at Hanging Rock about twenty-four miles from Camden, on the road to Charlotte, just on the dividing line between the present counties of Lancaster and Kershaw. Davie determined to interrupt the communication between these posts. On the 2d of July he fell upon a convoy of provisions at Flat Rock, a point about four and a half miles from Hanging Rock. The escort, some dragoons and volunteers, was surprised, and their capture was effected without loss; the wagons with the spirits and provisions were destroyed; and, with the prisoners mounted on the captured horses, the retreat was commenced at dark.

It has been said that Davie's corps was never surprised or dispersed during the war;¹ but in this his first adventure with his gallant little band, while he was not surprised, as he had expected that an attempt for the recovery of his booty and prisoners would be made, and had himself taken every precaution against it, the officer in command of his advance allowed his guard to be drawn into an ambushade which only Davie's prompt and judicious conduct prevented from proving fatal. When the retreat from Hanging Rock with the prisoners was begun, the advance was formed of guides and a few mounted infantry under the

¹ *Life of Marion (James)*, 74.

charge of Captain Petit; the prisoners in the centre were guarded by dragoons under the command of Captain William Polk, who served as a volunteer; a rear-guard closed the column. The ford of Beaver Creek which crossed his road was approached by a lane which Davie foresaw would afford a suitable place for an ambuscade. Anticipating that an attempt to rescue his prisoners would be made at this place, Davie had ordered Captain Petit to advance and examine the lane, the ford of the creek, and the houses near it, and was expressly directed to secure all the persons in the families around so that no alarm could be created. He returned and reported that he had executed his orders, and that all was well. Upon this the party advanced, and the rear-guard had just entered the lane when an officer in the lead hailed the British who were discovered concealed under a fence in a field of standing corn. A second challenge was answered by a volley of musketry from the concealed foe, which commenced on the right and passed by a running fire to the rear of the detachment. Davie rode rapidly forward and ordered the men to advance and to push through the lane; but under the surprise of the moment his troops turned back, and he was then compelled to repass the ambuscade under a heavy fire. Overtaking his men retreating by the same road they had advanced, he finally rallied and halted them upon a hill, but they were so discomfited at this unexpected attack that no effort could induce them to charge upon the enemy. A judicious retreat was the only course left to avoid further disaster. This was effected. Davie passed the enemy's patrols and regained his camp the next day without further accident or loss. The loss of Davie's corps was slight compared to the advantages gained by him in the capture of the convoy. It so happened that the fire of the British fell chiefly upon their own comrades,



Davie's prisoners, who were confined two on a horse, with the guard in the lane. They were nearly all killed or mortally wounded. In Davie's corps Lieutenant Elliott was killed, and Captain Petit and two of his men were wounded. In his account of this affair Davie observes that "it furnishes a lesson to officers of partisan corps that every officer of a detachment may at some time have its safety and reputation committed to him, and that the slightest neglect is generally severely punished by an enemy."¹

Soon after this Colonels Sumter, Lacey, and Neel with their volunteers from South Carolina and Colonel Irwin with 300 from Mecklenburg, North Carolina, joined Major Davie at Landsford on the Catawba. A council was held on the 30th of July, when it was determined that the British posts at Hanging Rock and Rocky Mount should be attacked. It must be borne in mind that none of the South Carolina officers at this time had any regular commissions. Sumter had been a Lieutenant Colonel in the Continental line, but had resigned. He is usually spoken of as a Brigadier,² but he was not so commissioned until the following October. Colonels Hill and Neel had been chosen Colonels, as we have seen, at a meeting of the patriots in their regimental limits, but there was no government to commission them. Governor Rutledge was in Philadelphia appealing to Congress for assistance. While therefore these officers held councils and devised plans, their recommendations were submitted to the men, whose approbation of a move in those times was absolutely requisite.³

¹ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 181. Wheeler quotes from a manuscript written under the eye of General Davie by his son, then on file in the archives of the Historical Society, at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, but which has unfortunately been lost. Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, '76, 169.

² *Ibid.*, 177.

³ Davie's MS. in Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 192.

This proposal to attack Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock was agreed to, and it was determined that Sumter with the South Carolinians under Hill and Lacey, and the men from Mecklenburg under Irwin, should proceed against Rocky Mount, while Davie with his corps and a part of the North Carolina volunteers under Colonel Heaggins should march on Hanging Rock to watch the motions of the garrison, to procure exact intelligence of the condition of the post, and to be ready to unite with Sumter in the intended blows.

Rocky Mount station was fixed upon the comb of a lofty eminence encircled by open wood. This summit was surrounded by a small ditch and abatis; in the centre were three log buildings, constructed to protect the garrison in battle and perforated with loopholes for the annoyance of the assailants. On the 1st of August Sumter approached this position with his characteristic impetuosity, but the British officer was found on his guard and defended himself ably. Three times did Sumter attempt to carry it, but was always foiled, and having no artillery to batter down the house, he ordered an assault led by Colonel Andrew Neel. The assailants penetrated the abatis, but Colonel Neel and five of his men fell in the attempt, and many were mortally wounded.¹ Sumter then ordered a retreat, which was effected without annoyance or further injury. The British loss was one officer killed, one wounded, and about ten men killed and wounded.²

Major Davie with about forty mounted riflemen and a like number of dragoons approached Hanging Rock the same day, and while reconnoitring the ground to commence

¹ Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, '76, 176; Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 191.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 94.



the attack, he received information that three companies of mounted infantry, a part of Bryan's North Carolina regiment of Loyalists returning from an excursion, had halted at a house near the post. This house was in full view of Hanging Rock. Davie at once determined to fall upon the party, and this he did with complete success.

Advancing cautiously and eluding the sentinels in one quarter with his infantry, and gaining the other point of attack with his horse undiscovered by marching through some adjoining woods, he placed the enemy between the two divisions. The riflemen, whose dress was similar to that of the Tories, passed the enemy's sentinels without suspicion or challenge, dismounted in the lane leading to the house, and gave them a well-directed fire. The surprised Loyalists fled to the other end of the lane, where they were received by the dragoons, who charged them boldly. Finding their front and rear occupied, the Loyalists attempted to escape in another direction believed to be open, but were disappointed. Davie having anticipated the movement, and detached thither a party of his dragoons in time to meet them, the party was cut to pieces in the face of the whole British camp at Hanging Rock. There was no time for taking prisoners. The Loyalists were all, except a few, killed or wounded. Sixty valuable horses and one hundred muskets were the booty taken from the enemy. The British camp beat to arms, but this brilliant but bloody affair was over and Davie out of reach before their forces were in motion, or their consternation and panic subsided from this daring and successful attack. Davie reached his camp safely without the loss of a single man.¹

On the 5th of August the detachments met again at

¹ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 191, 192; Lee's *Memoirs of the War*, '76, 176, 177.

Landsford on the Catawba. Their strength was little diminished; Major Davie's corps was intact. The North Carolina militia under Colonel Irwin and Major Davie's corps numbered about 500 men; the South Carolinians under Colonels Sumter, Lacey, and Hill, about 300. Sumter well understood that, composed as his command was, it must be constantly employed. He understood that the minds of such men are greatly influenced by enterprise. It was also a matter of great importance to remove the enemy from their posts in this neighborhood, and it was supposed that if one of them was taken the other would be evacuated. Upon a meeting of the officers, it was determined to attack Hanging Rock the following day. As this was an open camp, they expected to be on a more equal footing with the enemy; and the men, whose approbation was required, on being informed of the determination of the officers, entered into the project with spirit and cheerfulness. The troops marched in the evening and halted about midnight within two miles of the enemy's camp, when a council was called to settle the mode of attack. Accurate information had been obtained of the enemy's situation.

The British post was occupied by the infantry of the Legion, the Prince of Wales's American regiment, part of Browne's corps of Provincials, and Colonel Bryan's North Carolina Loyalists, a part of which had been cut to pieces by Davie a few days before. Colonel Bryan was one of the Loyalists who had promised to await Cornwallis's advance in the fall, but Moore's precipitate rising and Ruth-erford's subsequent movement had forced him to action, and with 800 Loyalists from the Yadkin he had reached the Seventy-first Regiment, then stationed in the Cheraws.¹ The garrison of Hanging Rock now amounted to 500 men,

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 91.



of which 160 were of the infantry of Tarleton's Legion.¹ The post was under the command of Major Carden of the Prince of Wales's American regiment.² The whole front of the British camp was covered by a deep ravine and creek. The regulars were posted on the right; a part of the Legion and Browne's regiment were at some houses in the centre, and Bryan's Loyalists on the left, separated from the centre by a skirt of wood.

Colonel Sumter proposed that the attack should be made in three divisions, each to march directly to the centre encampment, then dismount, and attack its corresponding camp of the enemy. This plan was approved by all the officers but Major Davie, who insisted on leaving the horses where they were and marching to the attack on foot, urging their confusion necessarily consequent upon dismounting under a fire, and the certainty of losing the effect of a sudden and vigorous attack. His advice was, however, overruled. The divisions were soon formed, and as the morning of the 6th of August broke the march to attack began. The general command was conferred on Colonel Sumter as the senior officer; Major Davie led the column on the right, consisting of his own corps, some volunteers of North Carolina, and some detached companies of South Carolinians. Colonel Hill commanded the left, composed of South Carolinians, and Colonel Irwin the centre, formed entirely of North Carolina Mecklenburg militia. The column turned from the road to avoid the enemy's picket and patrol, with the intention to return to it under cover of a defile near the camp; but the guides, either from ignorance or timidity, led them so far to the right that the three divisions all fell on Bryan's Tory encampment. These

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 92; Davie's account, Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 192; *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 177.

² Steadman's *Am. War*, 202.

people were attacked in front and flank, and routed with great slaughter. They fled in confusion toward the centre encampment, from which the Americans pressing in pursuit were received with a deadly fire from the British Legion Infantry and some companies of Browne's regiment posted behind a fence. Their impetuosity was not, however, for a moment checked by this unexpected fire. They pressed on and broke the Legion Infantry, who joined the flight of the Loyalists, and yielded their camp to Sumter's men. At this moment a part of Colonel Browne's regiment had nearly changed the fate of the day. By a bold and skilful manœuvre they passed into a wood between the Tory and centre encampments, drew up unperceived, and poured in a heavy fire on Sumter's men forming from the disorder of the pursuit on the flank of the encampment; but these brave men returned the fire with deadly effect, and in a few minutes there was not a British officer standing, many of the regiment had fallen, and the rest, on being offered quarter, threw down their arms. The remainder of a British line who had also made a movement retreated hastily toward their former position, and formed a hollow square in the centre of the cleared ground.

But now in the moment of victory an occurrence took place which was the first of a series of events which seemed inevitably in Sumter's career to lose him the full fruits of his courage and enterprise. The rout and pursuit of the enemy by a part of his command, and the plunder of their camp by others, threw the victorious Americans into great confusion. The utmost exertions were made by Sumter and the other officers to press the men to attack the British square, but the ranks had become so disordered that only two hundred men and Davie's infantry could be brought into array. These were collected and formed on the side of the road, and a heavy but in-



effectual fire was opened on the British troops. But Sumter could not, by all his exertions, bring his troops to risk close action with his well-posted enemy, supported by two pieces of artillery. On the other hand, a large body of the enemy, consisting of the Legion Infantry, Browne's regiment, and the Tories, were observed rallying and forming on the opposite side of the British camp near the woods. Upon this Major Davie passed round the camp under cover of the woods and fell upon them, routing and dispersing them.

The distance of the square from the woods prevented the Americans from making any considerable impression on the British troops, so that on Major Davie's return it was agreed to plunder the camp and retire. The British commissary stores in the centre of the encampment were taken, and unfortunately a number of men became intoxicated. Many also were loaded with plunder, and those in a condition to fight had exhausted their ammunition; about an hour had been employed in plundering the camp, taking the parole of the British officers, and preparing litters for the wounded. A retreat had now become absolutely necessary. This was commenced about twelve o'clock, very leisurely, in the face of the enemy, who did not attempt an interruption. As Sumter began to move off, a party was seen drawn up on the Camden road, with the appearance of a renewal of the contest. This was two companies of the British Legion returning from Rocky Mount, who, hearing the cannon and musketry at Hanging Rock, had made a circuit to get into the Camden road to reënforce their companions. Davie at once charged them with the *Caragoons*, when they took to the woods.

The British consoled themselves with military music and an interlude of three cheers for King George, which

was at once answered by three cheers from the Americans. Sumter's men at length got into the line of march, Davie and his dragoons covering the retreat. The loss of the Americans was never correctly ascertained, from the want of regular returns and many of the wounded being carried home from the action. The British historians assert that about one hundred dead and wounded were left on the field.¹ The corps of Davie suffered most.² He lost many while tying their horses and forming under a heavy fire, a measure against which he had advised in the council which had decided the mode of attack. Captain John McClure was mortally wounded. He had been shot through the thigh early in the action, but stuffing the wound with wadding he rushed ahead of his men, and his clear voice was still heard urging them to continue the charge. Just as the Tories broke he fell, with several wounds. He was removed to Charlotte, where he died on the 18th. In his death the country lost a hero, and his fellow-soldiers an officer who was all energy and vigilance in his warfare. Davie spoke of him as "the bravest of the brave."³ Captain Reed of North Carolina was killed; Colonel Hill, Major Winn, and Lieutenant Crawford of South Carolina, and Captain Craighead and Ensign McClure of North Carolina, were wounded.

The British loss exceeded that of the Americans. Tarleton states that Captain McCulloch, who commanded the Legion Infantry with much distinction, was killed with two other officers and 20 men, and upwards of 30 of the same corps were wounded; that the detachment of Colonel Browne's regiment had likewise lost some officers and men killed and a few taken prisoners; but that Colonel Bryan's North Carolina refugees were dispersed,

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 95.

² Johnson's *Traditions*, 346.

³ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 178.

and did not suffer considerably.¹ Lieutenant McKenzie, an officer of the Seventy-first Regiment, denies this latter statement, and says that it is attributable to Tarleton's partiality for his own corps which caused him to consign to oblivion the gallantry of those with which he was not immediately connected,² and in justification of this statement points out Tarleton's silence as to the loss of Lieutenant Brown of North Carolina, who fell in a desperate charge. Besides Lieutenant Brown, McKenzie states the loss in the North Carolina regiment at no less than 70 killed and wounded.³ Major Hanger, in reply to the strictures of McKenzie, states that the loss the Prince of Wales's regiment sustained was heavy, that both the officers and men were nearly destroyed; and adds in a note that the regiment consisted of about 80 or 90 men, of which every private, except 18 or 20, and every officer, were killed or wounded.⁴ From the British authorities, therefore, their losses were in the Legion Infantry killed and wounded 52; in the North Carolina Loyalists 70; in the Prince of Wales's regiment 70, and some officers and men killed and taken in Browne's regiment. The British loss can therefore be safely put down at something over 200.

Ferguson, as has been seen, had been steadily advancing from his camp on Little River through Union and Spartanburg. When Colonel McDowell became convinced that his movement threatened the invasion of North Carolina, he not only promptly raised what force he could from the sparsely populated settlements on the heads of

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 95.

² *Strictures on Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's History*, by Roderick McKenzie, Lieutenant Seventy-first Regiment (London, 1787), 26.

³ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴ *Address to the Army in Reply to Strictures by Roderick McKenzie, etc.*, Hanger (London, 1789), 28.

the Catawba, Broad, and Pacolet rivers to take posts in his front, but dispatched a messenger with the alarming intelligence to Colonels John Sevier and Isaac Shelby on Watauga and Holston, and those over-mountain regions then a portion of North Carolina but now of East Tennessee, urging those noted border leaders to bring to his aid all the riflemen they could, and as soon as possible.¹ Sevier, unable himself to leave his frontier exposed to the inroads of the Cherokees, responded at once to the appeal by sending part of his regiment under Major Charles Robertson; and Shelby, being more remote and having been absent on a surveying tour, was a few days later, but joined McDowell at the head of 200 mounted riflemen about the 25th of July, at his camp near the Cherokee Ford on Broad River,² near the junction of the present counties of Union, York, and Spartanburg.

When Colonel Elijah Clarke returned to Georgia, he found warm and zealous advocates in the members of the council of the revolutionary government in rousing into action and resistance the Whigs of the western district of the State. The greatest exertions were used to stimulate them to join their countrymen and resist the enemy; but during their continuance in that State it was necessary to secrete the recruits in the woods, and privately to support them by their friends. This mode of living soon became insupportable, and a general wish prevailed to leave the State and join those who were in the field in South Carolina, where their services would be useful. Clarke's men were therefore again assembled, crossed the Savannah, and marched along the slope of the mountains until they met Colonel Innes, near the line between South and North

¹ For sketches of Sevier and Shelby, see *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper) and *The Winning of the West* (Roosevelt).

² *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 84.

Carolina. Always choosing the most advantageous position, Clarke often shifted his camping ground to guard against surprise. His little force was augmented from time to time by small parties from Georgia, and by Captain James McCall, of South Carolina, of whose capture and escape from the Indians we have told, with about twenty men from Colonel Pickens's regiment from the Ninety-Six region. With this body Clarke pushed on and joined Sumter on the Catawba.

Draper relates this story of the capture of Captain Patrick Moore, a noted Loyalist. Moore had escaped from the slaughter at Ramsour's Mill on the 20th of June, when his brother, Colonel John Moore, safely returned to Camden. Anxious for the capture of Captain Moore, Major Joseph Dickson and Captain William Johnson were sent out early in July to apprehend this noted Tory leader, and others if they could be found. On Lawson's Fork of Pacolet River, near the old Iron Works, since Bivingsville, and now known as Glendale, the parties met and a skirmish ensued, in which Captain Johnson and the Tory leader had a personal rencontre. Moore was at length overpowered and captured, but in the desperate contest Johnson received several wounds on his head and on the thumb of his right hand. While bearing his prisoner toward the Whig lines a short distance away, he was rapidly approached by several British troops. Attempting to fire his loaded musket at his pursuers, it unfortunately missed in consequence of the blood flowing from his wounded thumb and wetting his priming. This misfortune on his part enabled his prisoner to escape, and, perceiving his own dangerous and defenceless condition, he promptly availed himself of a friendly thicket at his side, eluded his pursuers, and shortly after joined the command.¹

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 86, 86.

At this time or soon after Moore commanded Fort Anderson, or Thicketty Fort as it was more generally called, situated a quarter of a mile north of Goucher Creek and two and a half miles above the mouth of this small water-course which empties into Thicketty Creek, a western tributary of Broad River uniting with that stream a few miles above the junction with Pacolet. It was a strong fortress, built a few years before for a defence against the Cherokees, and was surrounded by a strong abatis well fitted for a vigorous defence. It became a great place of resort and protection for Tory parties. They would sally forth from Thicketty Fort and plunder Whig families in every direction, so that women and children were often left without clothing, shoes, bread, meat, or salt.

Sumter, hearing of Ferguson's inroads beyond Broad River, directed Colonel Clarke and his Georgians who had now joined him, together with such persons in that region as desired to aid in its protection, to repair to that quarter. Captain William Smith, afterwards the distinguished judge and senator from South Carolina, and his company availed themselves of this privilege. Arriving at Cherokee Ford, they met Colonel McDowell, where Colonel Shelby, Colonel Clarke, Colonel Andrew Hampton, and Major Charles Robertson of Sevier's regiment were detached with six hundred men to take Thicketty Fort some twenty miles distant. The detachment took up the line of march at sunset on the 29th of July and surrounded the post at day-break the next morning. Colonel Shelby sent on William Cooke, who in after years was United States senator from Tennessee, to make a peremptory demand for the surrender of the garrison. Moore replied that he would defend the place to the last extremity. Shelby then advanced his lines to within musket shot of the enemy to make an assault. Upon this formidable appearance and decisive



action Moore relented and proposed to surrender on condition that the garrison should be paroled, not to serve again during this war unless exchanged. This was readily acceded to, as the Americans did not care to be encumbered with prisoners. Thus ninety-three Loyalists with one British sergeant-major surrendered without firing a gun, and among the trophies of victory were 250 stands of arms, all loaded with ball and buckshot, and so disposed at the portholes that double the number of Whigs might easily have been repulsed. A letter taken among the spoils, after the battle of King's Mountain, states that the officer next in command and all the others gave their opinion for defending the post, and charged cowardice and treachery on the part of Moore.¹ The capture of Thicketty Fort occurred on Sunday, the 30th of July. Shelby and his men, loaded with the spoils of victory, returned at once to McDowell's camp near Cherokee Ford.

McDowell's force at this time could not have exceeded 1000 men, while Ferguson's must have reached from 1500 to 1800. It was, therefore, the policy of the Americans to maintain their position near Cherokee Ford until they could increase their forces sufficiently to meet Ferguson and overcome him. In the meanwhile, Colonel McDowell again detached Colonels Shelby, Clarke, and William Graham with a combined force of 600 mounted men to watch the movements of Ferguson's troops, and whenever possible to cut off his foraging parties. This party moved down Broad River some twenty-four miles to Brown's Creek, in what is now Union County, for the better and closer observation of Ferguson's movements. They were, however, soon compelled, by a superior force, to bear off

¹ Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*, 214; *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 88; *Colonial and Revolutionary Hist. of Upper So. Ca.* (Landrum), 128, 134.

thirty or forty miles to the upper portion of the Fair Forest settlement, within the present limits of Spartanburg. On the way they gathered strength. Hearing of these bold rebel troopers, Ferguson made several ineffectual efforts to surprise them; but Clarke and Shelby were constantly on the alert, and having no fixed camp, they were not easily found.

On the evening of the 7th of August Clarke and Shelby went into camp on Fair Forest Creek, nearly two miles west of Cedar Spring, at a point where the old road crossed that stream leading thence to Wofford's Iron Works and thence onward to the Cherokee Ford. These wary leaders did not omit, on this occasion, their habitual watchfulness; and fortunate it was for them that they were so on their guard. Before day, the next morning, their scouts returned with the intelligence that the enemy were within half a mile of them. About the same moment the report of a gun was heard in the direction of the British party, which was afterwards ascertained to have been fired by one of Dunlap's men — a Tory who felt some compunctions of conscience at the idea of surprising and massacring his countrymen, but who protesting that it was accidental, was not suspected of treachery. Upon this alarm the Americans retreated, seeking a better position to accept battle. They fell back to the old Iron Works at Lawson's Ford of Pacolet, leaving Cedar Spring apparently a mile to the right, and not very far from the old orchard on Thompson's place which was three or four miles from the ford over Fair Forest, a mile and a half from the Iron Works, and about a mile from Cedar Spring. Here an advantageous position was found, and the men were formed for battle.

Before their retirement from their camp at Fair Forest the evening before, Josiah Culbertson — a son-in-law of

Colonel John Thomas, Sr., who had, on a former occasion, shown great gallantry and determination,¹ and who had recently joined Shelby — had obtained permission to return home two or three miles distant on Fair Forest Creek, charged, however, with the duty of making observation of any enemy he might find in that quarter. About daylight the next morning he rode fearlessly into the encampment he had left the evening before, supposing it still to be occupied by his friends, not knowing that they had retreated and that Dunlap had occupied it. But Culbertson was equal to the emergency. Quickly discovering his mistake, with extraordinary coolness and presence of mind he rode very leisurely out of the encampment, with his rifle resting on the pommel of his saddle before him. As he passed along, he observed the dragoons getting their horses in readiness and making other preparations, indicating an immediate renewal of their line of march. No particular notice was taken of him in the British camp, as it was supposed he was one of their own men. He quietly left the camp in this way, but when out of sight he dashed off with good speed in the direction he inferred that Clarke and Shelby had gone, and soon overtook his friends, and found they had chosen their ground and were prepared for the onslaught.

Major Dunlap, who, as has been seen, was an officer of much energy and promptitude, soon made his appearance with a strong force — part provincial dragoons, and part mounted militia — and commenced the conflict. The onslaught was furious, but vigorously met. The action lasted half an hour and was severely contested. Dunlap's mounted riflemen who were in front recoiled at the first fire, and their commander found it difficult to rally them. Having at length succeeded, Dunlap placed himself at the

¹ Howe's *Hist. Presbyterian Church*, Vol. I, 534.

head of the dragoons, and led them on to renew the contest, followed by the mounted riflemen, who could not, however, be brought to very close quarters. Dunlap's dragoons, with their broadswords, played a prominent part in the action. In the fierce hand-to-hand contest, Clarke, who was maintaining a most unequal struggle with his foes, received two sabre wounds, one on the back of his neck and the other on his head, — his stock-buckle saving his life, — and he was even for a few moments a prisoner in charge of two stout men; but taking advantage of his strength and activity, he knocked one of them down, when the other quickly fled out of his reach.

A number of British prisoners were captured, and Dunlap was beaten back with considerable loss. He was pursued a mile, but could not be overtaken. About two miles below the battle-ground Dunlap's fugitives were met by Ferguson with his whole force, who together advanced to the Iron Works, from which, as they came in sight a few hours after the action, Clarke and Shelby were compelled to make a hasty retreat, leaving one or two of their wounded behind them. These were treated by Ferguson with humanity, and left there when he retired. As Clarke and Shelby expected, Ferguson now pursued with the hope of regaining their prisoners; but the American leaders retired slowly, forming frequently on the most advantageous ground to give battle, and so retarding the pursuit that the prisoners were finally placed beyond recapture.¹

Each side claimed the victory, though no great advantage had been gained by either. Draper observes that it is not

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Georgia*, vol. II, 313, 314; Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*, 224; *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 89, 102. Landrum maintains that this engagement should be called the second battle of Cedar Springs, and not of the Old or Wofford's Iron Works. *Colonial and Revolutionary Hist. of Upper So. Ca.* (Landrum), 142.

easy to determine the actual strength of the parties engaged, nor their respective losses. McCall does not specify how many on either side took part in the conflict — only that the Americans were outnumbered, erroneously naming Innes as the British commander, and states that the enemy pursued Colonel Clarke to Wofford's Iron Works, where he had chosen a strong position from which the British endeavored to draw him, that distant firing continued during the afternoon until near night, and that the Americans lost 4 killed and 5 or 6 wounded, while the enemy lost 5 killed and 11 wounded. Mills mentions in one place that Clarke's force was 168, in another 198, evidently ignorant of the presence of Colonels Shelby and Graham with their followers; that Ferguson and Dunlap combined numbered between 400 and 600, of which Dunlap's advance consisted of 60 dragoons and 150 mounted volunteer riflemen; that the Americans had 4 killed and 23 wounded, all by the broadsword, while Dunlap lost 28 of his dragoons and 6 or 7 Tory volunteers killed and several wounded.¹ Shelby in Haywood's *Tennessee* states Ferguson's full force at about 2000 strong, which Todd augments to 2500, of which Dunlap's advance was reputed at 600 or 700; that the strength of the Americans was 600, and acknowledges that 10 or 12 of the latter were killed or wounded, but does not state the loss of their assailants. Colonel Graham gives no numbers, but asserts that many of the enemy were killed. These several statements differ very much from the British reports and from each other. Rivington's *New York Royal Gazette*, of the 14th of September, places the loss of the Americans at 50 killed and the British at 8 killed. Allaire in his diary allows a British loss of between 20 and 30 killed and wounded, and puts the American loss at 3 killed and 21 wounded.² From these various accounts it may be con-

¹ Mill's *Statistics of So. Ca.*, 738.

² Appendix to *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 503.

cluded that the Americans lost 4 killed and about 20 wounded; and as Allaire, an officer in Ferguson's camp, was likely to know accurately the number killed and wounded on his side, the British loss may safely be taken at his statement.

The last chapter told the story of four successive partisan engagements on the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th days of July. This has added to the account six more: that at Flat Rock in Lancaster on the 20th of July; at Thicketty Fort in Spartanburg on the 30th; at Rocky Mount in Chester on the 1st August; at Hanging Rock in Lancaster on the same day; at Hanging Rock again on the 6th; and at the Old Iron Works in Spartanburg on the 8th. But there was still another field in which there was life and movement, and in which there were also other engagements — the region of the Pee Dee, to which we must now turn our attention.



CHAPTER XXIX

1780

WHILE the events just recorded were taking place in the upper part of the State, others no less stirring were transpiring in the Low Country. Tarleton's barbarity, as has been seen, had roused all the fierceness of the Scotch-Irish on the Catawba and the Broad rivers; and Ferguson had at first in vain attempted to conciliate, and then with no better success to awe, the Whigs on the Savannah and the Saluda. Another officer, Major James Wemyss of the Sixty-third British Regiment, had been sent on a similar errand against the Irish at Williamsburg and the Welsh on the Upper Pee Dee. Immediately after the fall of Charlestown, Major Wemyss marched from Georgetown to Cheraw on the west side of the Pee Dee River, destroying property of every description, and treating the inhabitants with relentless cruelty.

The atrocities perpetrated by the British and Tories, for the latter followed in the train of the conqueror, only served to drive the Whigs to desperation, and led to a terrible revenge when the time arrived for throwing off the yoke. Major Wemyss, after accomplishing the object of his bloody march, returned to Georgetown. On the 12th of November following, in attempting to surprise Sumter, as we shall see, he was taken prisoner, having been severely wounded in an engagement; and in his pocket was a list of the houses he had burned at Williamsburg and on the Pee Dee, which with great trepidation he showed to Sum-

ter, begging for protection against the Whigs, whose anger and revenge he so justly merited and greatly dreaded. Notwithstanding his atrocities, he was treated with indulgence, but became a cripple for life.¹ But in mentioning this we anticipate.

Early in June Major McArthur with the famous Seventy-first Regiment, which under Maitland had fought so gallantly on the Stono and at the siege of Savannah the year before, and then had taken part in the siege of Charlestown, was stationed at the Cheraws on the Pee Dee to cover the country between Camden and Georgetown, and to hold correspondence with the Tory settlement at Cross Creek, North Carolina.

Lord Cornwallis, in a letter to Sir Henry Clinton on the 30th of June, wrote, "I have agreed to a proposal made by Mr. Harrison to raise a provincial corps of five hundred men, with the rank of major, to be composed of the natives of the country between the Pee Dee and Wateree, and in which it is extremely probable he will succeed."² This man, to whom Tarleton refers as a man of fortune,³ was one of two brothers of bad character,—in fact, it is said, two of the worst banditti that ever infested a country. Before the fall of Charlestown they had lived by a road near McCallum's Ferry on Lynch's Creek, in a wretched log hut in which there was no bed covering but the skins of wild beasts. It was of such material that the British made officers for their purposes. The plan of raising the provincial corps failed, but the two brothers received high commissions: one, a major, was killed during the war; the other, the one alluded to by Tarleton, became a colonel, and after the war was over retired to

¹ Gregg's *Hist. of the Old Cheraws*, 302, 303; Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 188, 189; also James's *Life of Marion*, 73.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 117.

³ *Ibid.*, 91.

Jamaica with much wealth acquired by robbery.¹ The Tories led by these men committed many murders and depredations.²

During the occupation of Cheraw by Major McArthur, the Parish Church of St. David's was used as a barrack. According to tradition, McArthur and his officers were not wanting in courtesy to the ladies of the vicinity, and as a consequence were treated with such a degree of civility as the necessities of the case made imperative. The soldiers, however, were not generally restrained, and many persons in the neighborhood were plundered and treated with indignity. Numerous incidents are related of the sufferings and losses of the inhabitants during the brief sojourn of the enemy.

Soon after Major McArthur's arrival, he proceeded down the river with a detachment and made his headquarters for a short time at Long Bluff. While there he offered a reward for the capture of Thomas Ayer. Ayer had made himself conspicuous a short time before as the leader of a company which had been sent out to take some mischievous persons who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the inhabitants by their lawless depredations. Having succeeded in capturing a portion of the band, he secured the country against any more depredations by hanging them all.

The effect of the reward offered for Ayer was his capture by a party of Tory neighbors who had kept vigilant watch and caught him while on a visit to his family, sixteen Tories galloping up to the house to which he had come after night and securing him. Tied with buckskin thongs, they hurried him off to the river, intending to take him immediately to Major McArthur; but by the time they reached

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 45.

² *Hist. of Old Cheraus* (Gregg), 308.

Hunt's Bluff a severe thunder storm had blown up, and fearing to cross and to prosecute their journey through the swamp, they concluded to keep their prisoner in an old unoccupied house on the bank until the morning. So secure did they think themselves that George Manderson, the leader of the party, leaving Ayer in charge of the others, went down with one of his companions to get supper at the house of Jonathan Johns in the neighborhood. But relief was soon to overtake the desperate Ayer.

A few hours after the Tories left his residence, carrying him off with them, his elder brother Hartwell, with five others, rode up very unexpectedly to the family, and upon learning what had occurred they at once set out in pursuit, and took the Tory party completely by surprise. Approaching under cover of the darkness and storm, they were at the door of the house in which Thomas Ayer was held prisoner before they were discovered. Most of those guarding Ayer were asleep. Shooting first those that were up, they continued to fire and dispatch with the sabre and bayonet until all but one were killed. This one, Asal Johns, the son of his old neighbor, Jonathan Johns, a peaceable man, Thomas Ayer most generously and chivalrously protected with his own body. Having induced his rescuers to spare this man's life, Thomas Ayer mounted the horse of one of the Tories just killed, and returned home with all possible speed, not knowing what might have happened to his family during his absence.

But the tragedy did not stop here. Unfortunately, Hartwell Ayer was not governed by the generous impulse of his brother. Learning where George Manderson was with his companions, he went off in pursuit; and, riding up cautiously to old Johns's residence, they civilly inquired for Captain Manderson, who, as he approached, was received with a shower of bullets. But, as it happened, though

struck with several, the wounds inflicted were slight, and springing through the back door of the house he made his escape to the swamp near by. Tom Johns, also one of the captors of Captain Thomas Ayer, had a similar experience. He was knocked down with the butt of a musket and pinned to the floor by a bayonet, and left for dead. But on the bayonet being removed, he arose and proved to be not seriously injured.

When informed of the rescue of Ayer and the slaughter of the Tories, McArthur determined in person to take vengeance. Crossing the river with a strong party, he came very near surprising the Ayer family, then consisting of Mrs. Ayer and her sons Lewis Malone and Zaccheus, both of whom were lads. They timely escaped, however, to the swamp, and remained in concealment several weeks. McArthur took possession of the deserted premises, killed the stock, and burned all the buildings except a corn crib, which he spared on account of the corn it contained, and which afterwards became the dwelling of the family to the close of the war.¹

Colonel Hill, it will be recollected, assured the Whigs of York that Washington was sending them assistance. The grand army coming was under the command of General Gates, and as he approached South Carolina Lord Rawdon became anxious for the safety of the post at Cheraw, especially as the Highlanders of the Seventy-first Regiment had suffered greatly from the climate, to which they were unaccustomed. Tradition corroborates the accounts in the British histories, and tells how they sickened and died. Not many years ago quite a perceptible sink in the earth was pointed out as the spot where many of them were buried in one common grave. Major McArthur was directed to draw nearer to Camden, and on the 24th he

¹ *Hist. of the Old Cheraus* (Gregg), 309, 312.

moved to a position on the east branch of Lynch's Creek. Knowing of no enemy within many miles, he ventured to send about one hundred sick in boats down the Pee Dee to Georgetown, under the care of Lord Nairne and the escort of a detachment of the Royal militia under Colonel William Henry Mills. This Colonel Mills was a physician who had originally been in the revolutionary movement, and had been a delegate to the Provincial Congress in 1776, but had given in his adhesion at once to the British upon their success, and from that time became a determined foe to the American cause.

Hearing of the projected expedition down the river, a party of Whigs under the lead of James Gillespie collected at Beding's Fields, afterward Irby's Mills, three miles from Cheraw, and determined to surprise it. As they went on, their numbers increased, the command being assigned to Major Tristram Thomas. In the meantime, with the departure of the boats, McArthur retreated toward Black Creek. The Whigs fixed upon Hunt's Bluff, a point about twenty-five miles below Cheraw, between Darlington and Marlborough counties, for intercepting the expedition. A battery of wooden guns was hastily constructed and placed immediately on the bank in a sudden bend of the river. In due season, as the slowly moving flotilla appeared, a most imposing demonstration was made by the gallant Thomas, and unconditional surrender demanded. The British authorities charge that there was absolute treachery on the part of the Loyal militia, who, they say, rose in mutiny upon Colonel Mills;¹ the American accounts admit that it was not improbable that there was an understanding with some of the leading men of the party.²

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, 201; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 98.

² Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 139; *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 173; Johnson's *Life of Greene*, 292; Gregg's *Hist. of Old Cheraus*, 316.



However this may have been, no resistance was attempted, and the capture was effected. At the same time a large boat coming up from Georgetown, well stored with necessities for Major McArthur's force, was seized for the use of the American army. Colonel Mills succeeded in getting away, and made his escape to Georgetown. The other new-made British officers of the militia with the rest of the party were taken prisoners.

About the end of June Captain Ardesoif of the British navy arrived at Georgetown to carry Sir Henry Clinton's last proclamation into effect, and invited the people to come in and swear allegiance to King George. Many of the inhabitants of that district complied. But there remained a portion of it stretching from the Santee to the Pee Dee, including the whole of the present county of Williamsburg and a part of Marion, into which the British arms had not penetrated. The inhabitants of this section, it may be remembered, were generally of Irish extraction, and the Irish everywhere were almost as united against the Royal government as were the Scotch in its support.

A public meeting was called to deliberate upon the critical situation, and upon the course to be pursued in regard to Sir Henry Clinton's proclamation, especially as to Captain Ardesoif's orders under it. Major John James, who had before commanded some of these people in the field, conspicuously so in Moultrie's fight at the Coosawhatchie the year before, and had represented them in the General Assembly, was chosen to go down to Georgetown and learn from Captain Ardesoif whether by his proclamation, carrying out Sir Henry Clinton's, it was really meant that they should be required to take up arms against their fellow-countrymen. Major James proceeded to Georgetown, in the plain garb of a country planter, and was

introduced to the Captain at his lodgings a considerable distance from his ship. The Captain heard Major James with surprise and indignation that such an embassy should be sent to him, and promptly answered that "the submission must be unconditional." To an inquiry whether the inhabitants would not be allowed quietly to stay at home upon their plantations he replied, "Although you have rebelled against his Majesty, he offers you a free pardon; you must take up arms in support of his cause." To Major James's suggestion that the people he came to represent would not submit on such terms, the Captain, irritated at his bold language, particularly at the word "represent," replied, "You damned rebel, if you speak in such language, I will immediately order you to be hanged up to the yard-arm!" The Captain was armed with a sword, Major James had none; but perceiving what turn matters were likely to take, Major James seized the chair on which he was seated, brandished it in the face of Captain Ardesoif, and making his retreat good through the back door of the house, mounted his horse and made his escape into the country. The story narrated, however told or embellished, always concluded in the same way, "You must take up arms in support of his Majesty." This incident hastened the rise of Marion's brigade. Many of the people of Williamsburg had submitted and taken paroles, but they shuddered at the very thought of imbruing their hands in the blood of their countrymen. Besides this, two officers, Amos Gaskens and John Hamilton, had been put over them whom they despised. The first because he was a thief, and the second because of his profanity and immorality.¹

About this time news came of the approach of Gates; a public meeting was held, and it was unanimously re-

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 45.

solved to take up arms in defence of their country. Major James was chosen leader, and four companies were formed under their former captains: William McCottry, Henry Mouzon, John James (of the Lake), and John McCauley. Mouzon's company had been organized before. It consisted of seventy-five men previous to the fall of Charlestown, and to the honor of the company and of the community there had been but one Tory in it, and that was John Hamilton, just mentioned, a petty merchant of Kingstree, who had recently come from parts unknown. In the earlier part of the struggle he had been a decided Whig, but had turned Royalist and gone to Charlestown, from which he returned with a captain's commission in the British service.¹ These four companies mustered about four hundred men. Two more companies, Witherspoon's and Thornly's, were added under Major Hugh Giles of Pee Dee. General Gates had now arrived on the confines of the State, and in a consultation held among these leaders it was agreed to send to him a request that he should appoint them a commander.

Marion had, as we have seen, when he escaped the British on their advance into the interior, joined Baron De Kalb at Deep River, North Carolina. He had been well received by the Baron, who appears to have recognized at once his great merit, notwithstanding his uncouth garb and the ragged appearance of his party. But Gates could not conceive of military genius without military trappings, and gladly availing himself of an opportunity of getting rid of so unsoldierly a looking person, readily detached Marion at his request to proceed in advance into South Carolina, with orders to watch the motions of the enemy, furnish intelligence, and as we have seen to secure the boats on the rivers. Upon his coming into the State, he

¹ *Hist. of Williamsburg Church*, 41-109.

was accepted as the commander of this body, which, under his lead, was to become famous.

The Whigs were not idle, however, while awaiting the arrival of their new commander. They captured Gaskens and most of the officers appointed over them, and took post under Major James at the pass of Lynch's Creek, at Witherspoon's Ferry, four miles above its junction with the Great Pee Dee between the present counties of Williamsburg and Marion. The Tories on Lynch's Creek in the neighborhood of McCallam's Ferry, on the other hand, had about this time been giving great trouble. Matthew Bradley, Thomas Bradley, and John Roberts, respectable citizens, were killed in their own houses. The murderers were headed by the two Harrisons before mentioned. Captain McCottry was now posted in advance of Witherspoon's Ferry, at Indian Town, in what is now Williamsburg County. Colonel Tarleton, having learned of the Williamsburg meeting, crossing the country advanced at the head of seventy mounted militia and cavalry to surprise Major James. McCottry, receiving notice of this movement, sent back for reënforcement, but immediately marched his company of about fifty mounted men to give him battle. Tarleton, who had reached Kingston about dark on the 6th of August,¹ learning of McCottry's advance, through the wife of Hamilton, whose report increased McCottry's command, however, to five hundred men, retired at midnight. McCottry with his little band pursued the great British cavalry leader, but failed to overtake him. In this march Tarleton burned the settlement of Captain Mouzon, consisting of his residence and other houses, fourteen buildings in all, and posted thirty miles from Kingstree to Salem. At Salem Tarleton went to the house of Mr. James Bradley, disguised

¹ *Hist. of Williamsburg Church*, 48.

as an American officer, representing himself as Colonel Washington. In this disguise he drew from the aged patriot, who had been one of the original immigrants to Williamsburg, an unreserved statement of the feelings of the Whigs, and a detail of their plans for the defence of the country. Having gained his confidence, Tarleton then induced Mr. Bradley to conduct him across the swamps of Black River on his way to Camden. Having reached his camp, he threw off his disguise, avowed himself Colonel Tarleton, and informed Mr. Bradley that he was his prisoner. Carrying him to Camden he put him in irons. There the old man was repeatedly carted to the gallows to see his fellow-patriots executed, and was threatened at each time that he would be the next victim.¹

In the meantime Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Horry arrived from Georgetown with a small party. He declined for some time the command over Major James, to which his rank entitled him; but upon assuming it, he on all occasions animated the men by his gallantry and persevering patriotism.²

On the 10th of August Marion arrived at the post of Lynch's Creek, and took command of the party there and of the large extent of the country on the east side of the Santee.³ He was accompanied by Major Peter Horry, Major John Vanderhorst, Captains Lewis Ogier and James Theus, and Captain John Milton of Georgia.⁴ He was a stranger to the officers and men, and they

¹ *Hist. of Williamsburg Church*, 49.

² Ramsay's *So. Ca.*, vol. II, 404; James's *Life of Marion*. 45.

³ Judge James speaks of Marion as "General," and states that he was commissioned by Governor Rutledge. But this is a mistake. Governor Rutledge was still in Philadelphia, trying to get assistance from Congress. Marion was not commissioned General until the October following.

⁴ Ramsay's *So. Ca.*, vol. II, 404.

gathered around to obtain a sight of their new commander.

Marion was soon on the move. On the second day after his arrival, that is, on the 12th of August, placing white cockades upon his men to distinguish them from the Tories, he crossed the Pee Dee at Port's Ferry to disperse a large body, under Major Gainey, stationed on Britton's Neck between the Great and Little Pee Dee rivers. He surprised them at dawn in the morning, killed one of their captains and several privates, and had two men wounded. Major James was detached at the head of a volunteer troop of horse to attack the Tory horse. He came up with them, charged, and drove them before him. In this affair he singled out Major Gainey as the object of his own attack. At his approach Gainey fled, and James pursued him closely, nearly within the reach of his sword, for half a mile, when behind a thicket he came upon a party of Tories who had rallied. Not at all intimidated, but with great presence of mind, Major James called out: "Come on, my boys! Here they are! Here they are!" And the whole body of Tories broke again and rushed into the swamp. Another party of Tories lay higher up the river, under the command of Captain Barfield, who had been a soldier in one of the South Carolina regiments. These stood to their ranks, and were so resolute that Marion hesitated to attack on such equal terms; feigning, therefore, a retreat, he led them into an ambuscade, where they were defeated. This was his first manœuvre of the kind, for which he afterwards became so conspicuous.¹

To the list of engagements recorded in the last two chapters two more are now added, and the record for the month commencing the 12th of July and ending the

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 46.



12th of August now stood thus: Williamson's Plantation, York, Huck's defeat, 12th of July; Cedar Spring, Spartanburg, 13th of July; Earle's Ford, Pacolet River, Spartanburg, 14th of July; McDowell's Camp, Spartanburg, 15th of July; Flat Rock, Lancaster, 20th of July; Thicketty Fort, Spartanburg, 30th of July; Rocky Mount, Chester, 1st of August; Hanging Rock, Lancaster, 1st of August; Hunt's Bluff, Darlington, 1st of August; Hanging Rock, Lancaster, 6th of August; Old Iron Works, Spartanburg, 7th of August; Port's Ferry, Williamsburg, 12th of August. In these twelve engagements about three hundred British and Tories had been killed and wounded, and about two hundred taken prisoners, at a loss of not half that number to the Americans.¹ These battles had been fought by the volunteers of North and South Carolina and Georgia, who rose up in the path of the conqueror and held him at bay while the Continental army was slowly making its way through the sands of North Carolina.

The field had thus been thoroughly prepared for Gates's advance with the Continentals for which Congress had been asked. The people in South Carolina had not waited for his approach. They had themselves risen, and without waiting for arms or organization, or even commissions under which to fight, they had formed volunteer parties, chosen their leaders for the occasion, and in twelve engagements during the month from the 12th of July to the 12th of August, had driven in the enemy's outposts and had established an impromptu line from Georgetown on the coast to the foot of the Blue Ridge in Spartanburg. Marion had established a camp on the Pee Dee, threatening the British right; Sumter and Davie were on their front from Lynch's Creek to the Catawba, and from the Catawba to

¹ Exact numbers cannot be stated, as in some instances the number of casualties is not to be ascertained.

the Broad; while McDowell and Shelby and Sevier and Clarke were pressing in on their left. Everywhere these partisan bands had been successful. True, they had achieved no great victories, but they had crossed their swords and bayonets with British regulars and Tory Provincials, and held their own. They had tested their own courage and capacity, and could now trust to themselves with confidence. They had also found leaders who were developing military genius and enterprise. They had, in fact, already supplied the great want of the army advancing to their succor, that of light cavalry, to beat up the quarters of the enemy, to uncover his positions and communications, and ascertain his strength and his resources. All this preliminary work of an invading army Gates would find already accomplished as he entered the State. Everything was auspicious to a decisive and brilliant victory, — by the hero of Saratoga, — if, indeed, Gates was really entitled to the laurels accorded to him for that glorious achievement.



CHAPTER XXX

1780

It will be recollected that General Duportail had informed Lincoln on his arrival in Charlestown that Congress had proposed to General Washington to send the Maryland line to his relief, but that this had not been decided upon when he left Philadelphia on the 3d of April.¹ The proposition appears to have come from Washington to Congress, rather than from Congress to him.² It was not until the 17th of April that the division marched for Charlestown. To the Maryland line were attached the Delaware regiment, and the First Regiment of artillery with eight field-pieces, besides those attached to the brigades.³ This force was under the command of Baron De Kalb, whom Washington had sent in advance to Philadelphia to have everything in readiness to move as soon as Congress should give its consent.

Baron De Kalb, though a native of Germany, from his long service in the armies of France cannot but be considered a Frenchman, especially as it appears that during the entire period of his holding an American commission he continued a *pensioner* of that government, and as in the case of Duportail was one of its most indefatigable agents. During the year 1767 he had visited the colonies of Great Britain, by the direction of the Court of France, to ascer-

¹ *So. Ca. in the Revolution* (Simms), 135.

² Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 7.

³ *Ibid.*, 7, 20.

tain the points in which they were the most vulnerable, and to discern how far it was practicable to generate dissatisfaction, to excite jealousy against the mother country, and to arouse a desire of independence. He had been engaged in 1776 by Silas Deane to serve in the American army, and with Lafayette had arrived in April, 1777, at North Island, Winyaw Bay, near Georgetown, in South Carolina. Landing near the plantation of Major Benjamin Huger, — who fell afterwards, as has been seen, during Prévost's invasion, — they were cordially received by him upon their announcing themselves, hospitably entertained, and, anxious to reach their destination, were sent to Charlestown in Major Huger's own conveyance, and thence made their way to Washington. Having been appointed a Major General by Congress, he took part in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and after spending the winter at Valley Forge he had served in New Jersey.¹

By great exertions the detachment had been put upon the march, and after moving through Jersey and Pennsylvania they were embarked at the head of the Elk and were conveyed by water to Petersburg, Virginia, whence they proceeded by land. Charlestown had fallen before De Kalb had passed through the State of Virginia. Indeed, it was not until the 20th of June that he entered North Carolina, and then he halted at Hillsboro to rest his weary troops.² His advance had been retarded by various difficulties, the most important of which was want of provisions. This had been especially the case since his arrival in North Carolina. The legislative or executive power, he complained, gave him no assistance, nor could he obtain

¹ Garden's *Anecdotes*, 211; *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), Appendix D, 575.

² *No. Ca., 1780-81* (Schenck), 50.



supplies from the people but by military force. There was no flour in the camp, nor was attempt made to furnish any. His troops were reduced for a time to short allowance, and at length on the 6th of July brought to a positive halt at Coxe's Mills on Deep River but a few miles beyond Hillsboro.¹

The militia of North Carolina embodied under General Caswell were preparing to join the Baron on his route, while Brigadier General Stevens with some militia from Virginia was hastening also to the appointed rendezvous. Caswell and Stevens had been selected in consequence of past services. Caswell had early in the war given unquestionable proofs of his decision, zeal, and activity by the gallant stand he had made in 1776 at Moore's Bridge against a superior force, which terminated in the complete discomfiture of the Royalists and the consequent suppression of a formidable opposition to the new government. He had been the first Governor of the State of North Carolina. General Stevens had commanded a Continental regiment during the campaigns of 1777 and 1778, and fought under Washington in all the battles of those years, very much respected as a brave, vigorous, and judicious officer. Neither of these bodies, however, had yet formed a junction with the Continental army under De Kalb, which did not exceed fifteen hundred men, including Armand's dragoons and three companies of Harrison's regiment of artillery. Lieutenant Colonel Porterfield with his command of four hundred Virginians was still on the confines of South Carolina. While De Kalb was at Buffalo Ford on Deep River deliberating as to the line of his march, he received news of measures adopted by Congress for the Southern campaign.²

¹ *Life of Washington* (Irving), vol. IV, 91.

² Bancroft, V, 384.

Washington had desired General Nathanael Greene to succeed Lincoln in command; but Congress not asking his advice, nor ignorant of his opinion, on the 13th of June unanimously appointed Gates, the hero of Saratoga, who had been the centre of all the cabals and intrigues against the Commander-in-chief, to the independent command of the Southern army. Gates received his orders from Congress, and was to make his reports directly to that body. He was authorized to address himself directly to Virginia and the States beyond it for supplies, to appoint all staff officers, and to take such measures as he should think most proper for the defence of the South.¹ It has been seen how Lincoln, his second in command at Saratoga, had failed in this department. He came now full of confidence in his ability to recover the State which Lincoln had lost. On his way through Petersburg it is said that General Charles Lee, who had himself tried the effect of the Southern climate upon the flowers of an adventurer's ambition, called after him on parting, to beware lest his Northern laurels should turn into Southern willows. But no such doubt crossed the mind of the man who believed himself superior to Washington, and who hesitated at no course, however dishonorable, to secure the opportunity of demonstrating it to the world.

Gates arrived and superseded De Kalb on the 25th of July. He at once ordered the troops to be prepared to march at a moment's warning. It had been De Kalb's purpose to move by the way of Salisbury and Charlotte through the fertile and friendly counties of Rowan and Mecklenburg; but Gates, on the morning of the 27th of July, put what he called the "Grand Army" on its march by the shortest route to Camden through the sand hill region of North Carolina, a belt of "pine barren" as it is called, which com-

¹ Bancroft, V, 384.

mencing in Virginia extends through North and South Carolina into Georgia,—a country which then could offer no food but lean cattle, fruit, and unripe Indian corn,—a route which caused him to pass through the neighborhood of Cross Creek, the region most unfriendly to the American cause. This course he adopted against the wishes and advice of the principal officers of his army presented to him in a memorial. He crossed the Pee Dee at Mask's Ferry in North Carolina on the 3d of August, making a junction on its southern bank with Lieutenant Colonel Potterfield, who had found it difficult, in this region, to subsist even his small command.

Colonels White and Washington, after the fall of Charlestown, had retired into North Carolina to recruit their regiments, which had suffered so severely at Monck's Corner and at Lenuds's Ferry; they now solicited Gates to assist their efforts by the aid of his authority, so as to enable them to advance with him to the theatre of action; but Gates paid no attention to this request, and thus deprived himself of the most active corps belonging to the Southern army. Indeed, he did not conceal his opinion that he held the cavalry in the Southern field in no estimation.¹ He had promised, when setting out upon the march, that plentiful supplies of rum and rations were on the route and would overtake them in a day or two; and when these provisions failed, other promises were as recklessly made. The expectation founded on assurances of finding a plentiful supply of provisions at a place known as May's Mills, says Colonel Williams, the adjutant general to his army,² induced the troops again to obey with cheerfulness the order to march; but again disappointed, fatigued,

¹ Colonel Williams's narrative, *Life of Greene* (Johnson), Appendix B, 506.

² *Ibid.*, 488.

and almost famished, their patience forsook them ; mutiny was ready to manifest itself, and the most unhappy consequences were apprehended ; but regimental officers going among the men and remonstrating with them appeased their murmurs, for which unhappily there was too much cause. The officers by appealing to their own empty canteens and mess cases satisfied the rank and file that all suffered alike, and exhorting them to exercise the fortitude of which they gave the example, assured them that the best means of alleviating the present distress should be immediately adopted ; and that if the supplies expected by the General did not arrive very soon, detachments would be sent from each corps in all directions to pick up what grain might possibly be found in the country and brought to the mill. Fortunately, at May's Mill, a small quantity of Indian corn was brought into camp. The mill was set to work, and as soon as a mess of meal was ground it was delivered out to the men, and all were served in the course of a few hours. More poor cattle were sacrificed, the camp settlements all engaged, the men were busy but silent until they had eaten, and then all was again content, cheerfulness, and mirth. It was as astonishing as it was pleasing, says Colonel Williams, to observe the transition.

The General and field officers were not the first served upon this occasion, nor were they generally the most satisfied ; but as no one could suggest the means of immediate redress, no remonstrances took place with the commanding officer. Gates, however, was well informed of what was passing in camp and the critical disposition of the troops.

Colonel Otho Williams in his admirable narrative has loyally endeavored to explain the extraordinary adventure of his chief across the sand hills of this region of North and South Carolina, which then nearly resembled a desert, and has given the reason for his course as assigned by



Gates himself. He says that Gates, impressed by a sense of difficulties and perhaps conceiving himself in some degree accountable to the army for the steps he had taken, informed him that he had in a measure been forced to take the route he had followed; that General Caswell had evaded every order which had been sent to him, as well by the Baron De Kalb as by himself, to form a junction of the militia with the regular corps; that it appeared to him that Caswell's vanity was gratified by having a separate command; that probably he contemplated some enterprise to distinguish himself and gratify his ambition, which, said Gates, "I should not be sorry to see checked by a rap on the knuckles, if it were not that the militia would disperse and leave their handful of brave men without even nominal assistance." He urged further that it was the more necessary to counteract the indiscretion of Caswell and save him from disaster, as he then commanded the only corps of militia that were embodied in the Carolinas; that the assurances he had received from the executive of North Carolina gave him cause to suspect that supplies of provisions had been forwarded and used in profusion in Caswell's camp, notwithstanding intimations had been communicated to him that the militia were in as bad a situation in that respect as the regular corps.

This suspicion of insubordination in his own officers, and of their desire to eclipse and supplant him, is not to be wondered at in one who had spent so much of his own time in endeavoring to subvert the influence and fame of Washington and to supersede him as Commander-in-chief.

Gates urged also that having marched thus far directly toward the enemy, a retrograde or indirect movement would not only dispirit the troops, but intimidate the people of the country, many of whom had come in with arms. Dangerous as deceptions had been, it was still thought expedient

to flatter the expectation of the soldiery with an abundance of provisions as soon as a junction could be formed with the militia. After collecting therefore all the corn which was to be found in the neighborhood of May's Mill, and saving all the meal that could be spared from their present necessities, the march was resumed toward Camden.¹

As he crossed the State line General Gates issued a proclamation from the Pee Dee on the 4th of August, inviting the patriotic citizens of South Carolina to assemble under his auspices to vindicate the rights of America, holding out amnesty to all who had subscribed paroles imposed upon them by the ruffian hand of conquest, excepting only those who in the hour of trial had exercised acts of barbarity and devastation upon the persons and property of their fellow-citizens.² But the patriots of the State had not awaited his tedious approach, nor were his bombastic words necessary to stimulate their zeal. They had already arisen under their own leaders, and had driven in the enemy's outposts, and cleared his front for the blow which he was to give. Fortunately for the cause, their fate was not to be entirely committed to his keeping. Their own chosen leaders were to keep up the war, after he had failed and fled, as they had kindled and kept it alive before he came.

When Gates passed the boundary line of South Carolina, the British post at Hanging Rock was abandoned and Lord Rawdon took position on the west branch of Lynch's Creek about fourteen miles from Camden, that is, within the present county of Kershaw. His force here consisted of the Twenty-third, Thirty-third, and Seventy-first regi-

¹ Appendix to Johnson's *Life of Greene*, 489-490.

² Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 145, 449-451; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 98.



ments of infantry, the volunteers of Ireland, Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton's Provincial corps, about forty dragoons of the Legion, and four pieces of cannon. The hospital, the baggage, the provisions, the ammunition, and the stores remained under a weak guard at Camden.¹

On the 7th of August the junction at last took place between Caswell, with his North Carolina militia, and Gates's Continental army. This junction was effected at the Cross Roads in what is now Chesterfield County, east of the east branch of Lynch's Creek, and fifteen miles east of the enemy's post.²

The spirits of both were greatly enlivened by the event. The militia were relieved from the apprehension of an attack under which they had been for some time; while the regulars exulted in the confidence with which they had inspired their new comrades. The army was formed into two divisions. Baron De Kalb commanded the regulars, which constituted the right wing, and General Caswell the North Carolina militia, which constituted the left. In this order they marched a few miles toward the enemy and encamped for the night.

Colonel Williams tells that on the first night after the junction, having much anxiety as adjutant general to observe the guards, he went with Lieutenant Colonel Ford, the officer of the day, at an unusual hour to inspect the lines. The guards and sentinels on the right wing were found as usual attentive, and hailed the visiting rounds with an alacrity and spirit which inspired confidence and security in that quarter; but in the left wing all was tranquil. The officers patrolled around the encampment without being once hailed, and then rode into

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 99.

² Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 145; Williams's narrative, Appendix to Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 490.

the lines and among the tents, and even approached the marquees of some of the general and field officers — one of whom complained of being disturbed, and intimated that it was an unreasonable hour for gentlemen to call. The officers of the day were sent for, and guards and patrols were sent out to secure the encampment from surprise.

General Gates was now closely approaching the enemy; but his troops still subsisted upon precarious supplies of corn meal and lean beef, of which they often did not receive a ration per day, and no possibility existed of doing better without abandoning the route in which he had pertinaciously persisted. To have turned aside to the fertile fields of Black River, would have been leaving the garrison of Camden between him and the expected reënforcement from Virginia under General Stevens. Besides this, hopes were still held out of considerable reënforcement from North Carolina in a few days. On the other hand, an abundant supply of provisions could be obtained in the Waxhaws settlement; but to reach it would require two or three days' march, and the movement would have the appearance of retreating before the enemy, as it lay so much out of the way. There was no decision. There was hesitation. The army continued its march unconscious of what step was next to be taken. Gates, having refused the assistance of the dragoons of White and Washington, having got rid of Marion and failed to use Sumter, now began to perceive the danger of approaching an enemy of whose numbers he had no intelligence. Strange to say, also, he was encumbered with an enormous train, and a multitude of women and not a few children. An effort was therefore made to get rid of some of the impediments. A detachment under Major Deane and a number of wagons were detailed to convoy to Charlotte all the heavy baggage and as many of the women as could be



driven from the line; many of the latter, however, preferred sharing every toil and every danger with the soldiery to the security and provisions which were promised them. The army advanced; but upon approaching the enemy's post on Little Lynch's Creek it was discovered to be situated on the west side of the water on commanding ground, and to be very formidable. It was necessary, therefore, to depart from the shortest route to the enemy's principal outpost, Camden, which he had boasted it was his intent to hold to. The army defiled by the right, and Colonel Hall of Maryland with a detachment of three hundred men covered the left until it was out of danger from surprise, and then formed the rear-guard. This manœuvre on the 11th of August induced Lord Rawdon to retire with some precipitation to Camden.¹

While the two armies were facing each other at Lynch's Creek, Lord Rawdon sent to Lieutenant Colonel Cruger at Ninety-Six to forward to Camden without loss of time the four companies of light infantry under Captain Charles Campbell. He directed the troops at Rugeley's Mills to quit their position. Major Carden from Hanging Rock with the detachment of Browne's regiment, which had been engaged in the fight on the 6th, was ordered to Camden, and the Legion Infantry under Captain Stewart were desired to find the most direct road from their present situation to Lynch's Creek. A guide conducted Captain Stewart to the outposts of General Gates's army; a warm salutation from the picket discovered the mistake. Lord Rawdon withdrew the corps from Rugeley's Mills because of its exposed situation, and for the same reason he ordered Lieutenant Colonel Turnbull to evacuate Rocky Mount and to join Colonel Ferguson at his position on Little River.²

¹ Williams's narrative, Appendix to Johnson's *Life of Greene*, 401.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 100.

On the 9th of August two expresses arrived in Charlestown, bringing to Lord Cornwallis the information that Gates was advancing from North Carolina toward Lynch's Creek with an army supposed to amount to six thousand men, exclusive of one thousand under Sumter, who, after having in vain attempted to force the posts at Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock, was believed at that time to be moving round the left of the British position to cut off his communication with the Congaree and Charlestown; that the disaffected country between the Pee Dee and Black rivers had revolted, and that Lord Rawdon was contracting his posts and preparing to assemble his force at Camden. Upon this Lord Cornwallis, after finishing some important business, set out on the evening of the 10th, and arrived at Camden in the night between the 13th and 14th, and there found Lord Rawdon with all his force.

As Lord Rawdon had retired, Gates had advanced, and on the 13th had encamped at Colonel Rugeley's place, Clermont. Brigadier General Stevens arrived with his Virginians on the 14th, and encamped with the rest of the army. General Stevens had brought a reënforcement of men, but no provisions to support them except a few articles of West India produce, principally molasses. No effort was made to collect supplies more than to serve from day to day. The obscure route by which the army had marched kept their friends ignorant of the movement, and Gates's arrival at Clermont was indeed more of a surprise to the Whigs than to the Tories. It was justly supposed that if Gates had taken a secure position with his army, and waited only a few days, abundance of provisions would have flowed into his camp, and a large addition of volunteers under the leaders who had already shown their courage and capacity would have been made to his force — an addition which would have made his army superior to that

of the British. But vain confidence in his own prowess and reckless credulity prevailed over all sober counsels. On the day of the arrival of Stevens, a citizen of Camden came as if by accident into the American encampment and was taken to Gates's headquarters. This individual affected ignorance of the approach of the Americans, pretended very great friendship for his countrymen, the Marylanders, and promised the General to be out again in a few days, with all the information the General wished to obtain. The information which he then gave was the truth, but not all the truth, which events afterwards revealed; yet so plausible was his manner that Gates dismissed him with many promises if he would faithfully observe his engagement.¹ The suspicions of the officers about headquarters were aroused, but the General's confidant was allowed to go without restraint; and he went doubtless to Lord Cornwallis with a full report not only of Gates's strength, but of an important move Sumter was about to make.

It happened at this time that a convoy with clothing, arms, and other stores for the troops at Camden was on its way from Charlestown. The news of Marion's appearance on the Pee Dee had diverted the march of the escort and wagons from the road by the way of Nelson's Ferry over the Santee to the higher route by way of McCord's Ferry over the Congaree. Sumter, having intelligence of this, and that the escort must necessarily pass the Wateree at a ferry about a mile from Camden, under cover of a small redoubt on the other side of the river under the command of Colonel Carey, informed General Gates and requested a small reënforcement of infantry and two small pieces of artillery to join the volunteers, promising to intercept the convoy. General Gates not only approved the expedition and furnished the detachment, but appar-

¹ Williams's narrative, Appendix to Johnson's *Life of Greene*, 491.

ently subordinated the movements of his army to its success. He detailed four hundred Continental regulars, a party of artillery with two brass field-pieces under Lieutenant Colonel Woolford, to join Sumter. The moment the detachment under Woolford joined Sumter, he put his command under march for Camden Ferry. Near the break of day of the 15th he found himself advanced undiscovered to within a few miles of Carey's Fort. A strong detachment of his men under Colonel Thomas Taylor was at once pushed forward to gain the rear of this fort and cut off the retreat of Carey's detachment, to prevent its forming a junction with the convoying party. Taylor approached with such caution and silence as to find Carey's party wholly unconscious of the danger that awaited them. The opportunity was favorable, and he improved it by so sudden and impetuous an attack that the whole party surrendered without any serious opposition. Seven of the British were killed and thirty taken prisoners.¹ Learning from them that the convoy was at no great distance in the rear, and equally unapprehensive of danger, Taylor immediately advanced upon it. The similitude of his appearance with the homespun dresses of the Loyalists excited no apprehension in the convoying party until they found themselves surrounded, and seventy more prisoners were secured.² With the prizes he had secured Sumter at once commenced a retreat up the western side of the Wateree, or Catawba, as the river is called beyond Camden.

Gates does not appear to have had any conception of the promptness and rapidity of Sumter's movements, and did not expect that his attack upon Carey's Fort and the convoy would take place until the next day, the 16th,

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 148 (Sumter's letter).

² *Ibid.*



when it was his intention to attract the attention of the British at Camden by a display of his own army in their front.¹ Accordingly, on the 15th, unaware of Sumter's already achieved success, he issued orders that the troops should be ready to march at ten o'clock that night. The profoundest silence was enjoined, and it was ordered that if any soldier should fire without the command of his officer, he must be instantly put to death. By the order of march at the head of the column was placed Armand's Legion. Armand was one of the many French gentlemen who joined the American army. His officers were generally foreign, and the soldiers not even as good as those of Pulaski — indeed, they were chiefly deserters. It was the last corps in the army which should have been intrusted with such a position.² To make matters worse, Gates, while putting this corps in the position of honor, made the further blunder of expressing his distrust by the very terms of the order which assigned them to it. Colonel Porterfield's light infantry was to march upon the right flank of Colonel Armand in Indian, that is in single, file, two hundred yards from the road; Major Armstrong's light infantry in the same order as Colonel Porterfield's, upon the left flank of the Legion. The order then went on to direct: "In case of an attack by the enemy's cavalry in front, the light infantry upon each flank will instantly move up and give and continue the most galling fire upon the enemy's horse. This will enable Colonel Armand not only to support the shock of the enemy's charge, but finally to rout them; *the Colonel will therefore consider the order to stand the attacks of the enemy's cavalry, be their number what they may, as positive.*" Having arranged the order in which the other troops were to follow, the order directed

¹ Williams's narrative, Appendix to Johnson's *Life of Greene*, 492.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 181, note.

“when the ground will admit of it, and the near approach of the enemy renders it necessary, the army will (when ordered) march in columns.”

After preparing the order, the General showed it to Colonel Williams, his adjutant general, showing him at the same time a rough estimate of the forces under his command, making them upward of seven thousand. Gates appears to have had no returns made previous to setting out on the march, and his estimate was doubted by Colonel Williams, who had the prudence, while summoning the general officers to a council to be held in Rugeley's barn, to call also upon the commanding officers of the different corps for a field return; and as he was not required to attend the council, he busied himself in collecting these returns, and forming an abstract for the General's better information. This abstract was presented to Gates as the council broke up, immediately as he came to the door. Casting his eyes upon the numbers of rank and file *present for duty* which was exactly *three thousand and fifty-two*, he said that there were no less than *thirteen* general officers in council, and observed something about the disproportion between the number of officers and privates. Colonel Williams appears to have pressed upon his attention the difference between the actual returns and the estimate he had formed, to which Gates replied, “There are enough for our purpose;” and without saying what that purpose was, went on to observe “there was no dissenting voice in the council where the orders have just been read.” The orders he directed to be published to the army.

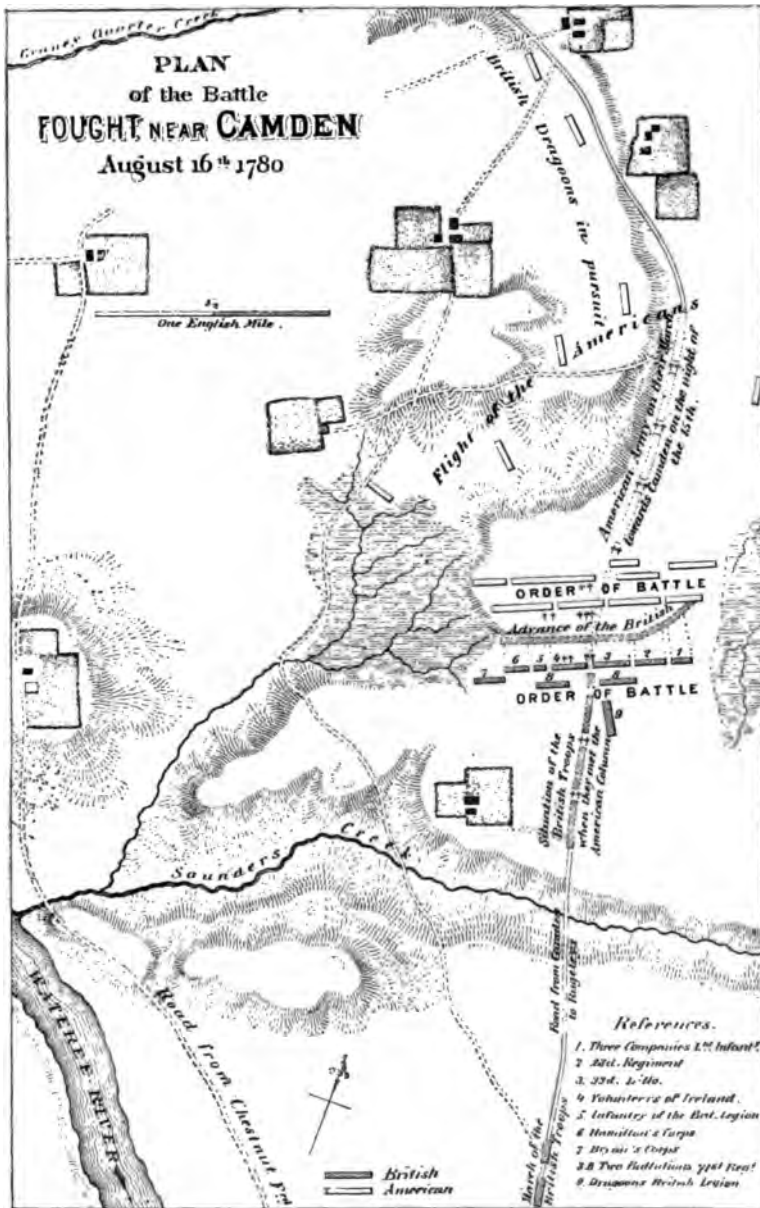
Though there had been no dissent in the council, the orders were no sooner promulgated than they became the subject of animadversion. It was said by some that there had been no consultation; that the orders were read to them, but all opinion suppressed by the very positive and

decided terms in which they were expressed. Others could not imagine how it could be conceived that an army consisting of more than two-thirds militia, which had never been once exercised in arms together, could form columns and perform other manœuvres in the night and in the face of an enemy. But of all the officers, Colonel Armand took the greatest exception. He regarded the terms of the order in which he was directed to consider his instructions to stand the attack of the enemy's cavalry *as positive* as an implied doubt of his courage. He very properly, also, objected to the order itself, declaring that cavalry had never before been put in front of a line of battle in the dark, and went so far as to charge that he was to be put in this false position by Gates from his resentment on account of an altercation which had taken place between them on their way through the wilderness. There was a good deal more discussion, says Williams, but the time was short, and the officers and soldiers generally, neither knowing or believing any more than the General that any considerable body of the enemy were to be met with out of Camden, acquiesced, and with their usual cheerfulness were ready to march at the appointed hour.

Gates has been criticised for weakening his army, though in striking distance of his foe, by detaching to Sumter the 400 men under Colonel Woolford;¹ but his error was more fundamental. It was in his unpardonable ignorance of the actual number of men under his command. If he had had more than 7000, as he had estimated his strength before complying with Sumter's requisition, it would not have been an unwise disposition. And as it was, Sumter's advance down the west bank of the Wateree in connection with Marion's appearance on the Pee Dee had the effect of forcing Cornwallis's movements. His lordship reported

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 179.

that on his arrival in Camden he found himself in a position in which he was obliged to act at once. He must either retreat or at once assume the offensive. The position of Camden was untenable. Sumter had cut him off from his supplies, and his provisions on hand must have failed in a few days. He saw no difficulty in making good his retreat to Charlestown with the troops that were able to march; but in adopting that course he must have left nearly 800 sick and a great quantity of stores at Camden, and he clearly saw in that event the loss of the whole province except Charlestown, as immediate consequences, besides forfeiting all pretensions to future confidence from their adherents in this part of America. On the other hand, he accepted the account, probably brought him by Gates's confiding friend, that the rebel army was upwards of 5000 men, exclusive of Sumter's detachment and a corps of Virginia militia of 1200 or 1500 men, who had either actually joined or expected to join the main body every hour. His own strength he counted at about 1400 fighting men of regulars and Provincials, with 400 or 500 militia and North Carolina refugees. What he lacked, however, in numbers, he confidently assumed was counterbalanced by the excellent character of his troops, who were veterans. Charlestown he had left sufficiently garrisoned and provided for siege, and seeing little to lose by a defeat and much to gain by a victory, Cornwallis determined at once to attack. He had ascertained that Gates after marching from Hanging Rock had encamped at Colonel Rugeley's, about twelve miles from Camden, on the afternoon of the 14th; and later, in the evening of the 15th, he received information that the Virginians had joined Gates that day. But this did not alter his determination. At ten o'clock he marched, leaving the defence of Camden to some Provincial militia and convalescents, and a detachment of the Sixty-third Regiment.







It thus happened that both armies, ignorant of each other's intentions, moved about the same hour of the same night. But there was this difference, — Gates was advancing without any determined purpose of bringing on an engagement, but rather of making a demonstration to draw off attention from Sumter's movement, which curiously had then already been successfully accomplished, and had itself actually set Cornwallis in motion; while, on the other hand, Cornwallis was advancing, despite of it, bent upon forcing Gates to battle. The armies approaching each other with these different views met halfway sometime after midnight¹ on the morning of the 16th of August.

In the advance of Gates's column rode Armand, burning with resentment, at the head of his unreliable corps, while Tarleton's dragoons led Cornwallis's march. The collision of these advanced guards was the revelation to each army of the presence of the other. Upon the collision both advanced parties recoiled. The officer commanding the detachment of the British Legion was wounded, and the detachment gave way. On the American side, some of Armand's cavalry were wounded and retreated; and in their retreat threw the whole of the rest of his corps into disorder, and these, recoiling suddenly on the front of the column of infantry, threw the first Maryland brigade into confusion. Upon the giving way of the Legion the British line was promptly restored by the light infantry of the Twenty-third and Thirty-third regiments, under Lieutenant Colonel Webster, who commanded the front division of the King's troops.² The disorder caused by the retreat of Armand's cavalry was not as easily reme-

¹ Cornwallis puts the hour at 2.30 A.M., Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 131; Colonel Williams "at midnight," Johnson's *Life of Greene*, Appendix, 404.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 104.

died; it occasioned, indeed, a general consternation through the whole line of Gates's army.¹ This affair of the advance guard was followed by a musketry fire, which continued for nearly a quarter of an hour, when the two armies, finding themselves thus unexpectedly in touch with each other, ceased firing and acquiesced in a suspension of hostilities.²

Some prisoners were taken on both sides, and from one of these Colonel Williams, the Adjutant General of the American army, obtained information respecting the situation and numbers of the enemy. He learned that Lord Cornwallis commanded in person, and was informed that about three thousand regular British troops were in line of march about five hundred or six hundred yards in front. Order having been restored, the officers were employed in forming a line of battle, when Colonel Williams communicated to General Gates the information he had received from the prisoner. Gates could not conceal his astonishment, and at once called another council of war of all the general officers. This took place in rear of the line, when the unwelcome news was communicated to them. General Gates asked, "Gentlemen, what is best to be done?" All were silent for a few moments, when General Stevens exclaimed, "Gentlemen, is it not too late *now* to do anything but fight?" No other advice was offered, and the General desired the gentlemen to repair to their respective commands.

Baron De Kalb appeared to have assumed it as a matter of course that Gates would have ordered a retreat; he did not, however, oppose the suggestion of General Stevens, and measures were at once taken preparatory to action. Lieutenant Colonel Porterfield, in whose bravery and

¹ Williams's narrative, Johnson's *Life of Greene*, Appendix, 494.

² *Ibid.*



judicious conduct great dependence was placed in the first rencontre, received a mortal wound and was carried from the field.¹ His infantry kept the ground in front, and the army was formed in the following order: the Maryland division, including the Delawares, under Brigadier General Gist, on the right; the North Carolina militia, under Brigadier General Caswell, in the centre; and the Virginia militia, under Stevens, on the left. Each flank was covered by a swamp so near as to admit the removing of the First Maryland Brigade, under General Smallwood, to form a second line about two hundred yards in the rear of the first. The artillery was placed in the centre of the front line, and the North Carolina militia (light infantry), under Major Armstrong, which had retreated in the first collision, was ordered to cover a small interval between the left wing and the swampy grounds in that quarter.

Gates, the hero of Saratoga, — he who was to save the country despite of Washington, “the weak general who was running it,”² he who was to render the Southern army irresistible,³ — was now brought to the test of his vaunted prowess. He had reaped at Saratoga honors, the seeds of which Schuyler had sown. Now he must show whether he was worthy of them. With Lee’s ominous caution, “Beware that your Northern laurels do not change to Southern willows,” ringing in his ears, he stood there as the morning dawned, appalled at the suddenness of the trial he had so vaingloriously challenged. He, the critic of Washington and the favorite of Congress, who had been sent to command in the South against Washington’s pref-

¹ Charles Porterfield, then a sergeant, was the first person who crossed the barricade when Arnold stormed the heights at Quebec, Morgan being the second. Marshall’s *Life of Washington*, vol. II, 333, note.

² Irving’s *Washington*, III, 303.

³ *Ibid.*, 348.

erence, now in this supreme moment of trial utterly failed; for the battle he had sought he was without plan and without expedient. He gave no orders. To Colonel Williams's suggestion that if the enemy in the act of deploying were briskly attacked by General Stevens's brigade, which was already in line of battle, the effect might be fortunate, he but weakly observed, "That's right — let it be done." This is apparently the only direction he gave during the battle.¹

Lord Cornwallis, on the other side, had soon mastered the situation. He had ascertained that the ground on which both armies stood, being narrowed by swamps on the right and left, was extremely favorable for his numbers; and while not choosing to risk the uncertainty of a fight in the dark, he took measures to secure the position until morning. At the dawn he formed his troops for the battle. The division on the right consisted of a small corps of light infantry, the Twenty-third and Thirty-third regiments, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Webster. The division on the left consisted of the volunteers of Ireland, the infantry of the Legion, and part of Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton's North Carolina regiment under the command of Lord Rawdon, with two six-pounders and two three-pounders. The Seventy-first Regiment with two six-pounders was formed as a reserve, one battalion in rear of the division of the right, the other in rear of that of the left. The cavalry of the Legion was in the rear, close to the Seventy-first Regiment, with orders to seize any opportunity that might offer to break the enemy's lines, or to protect their own in case any corps should meet with a check.²

Colonel Williams, having obtained the assent of General

¹ Williams's narrative, Johnson's *Life of Greene*, Appendix. 495.

² Lord Cornwallis's report, Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 132.



Gates that Stevens should attack, hastened to Stevens, who instantly advanced with his brigade, apparently in fine spirits; but the right wing of the enemy was found already in line. It was too late to surprise them; Colonel Williams nevertheless requested General Stevens to let him have forty or fifty volunteers with whom to commence the attack. These he led forward within a few yards of the enemy, taking shelter by the trees and keeping up a brisk fire.¹

Lord Cornwallis, whose lines had just been formed, observing this movement, directed Lieutenant Colonel Webster to begin the attack, which was done with great vigor, and in a few minutes the action was general along the whole front. General Stevens, observing the enemy about to charge, reminded his men of their bayonets; but the impetuosity with which the British advanced, firing and hurrahing, threw the whole body of the militia into such a panic that they threw their loaded arms down and fled in the utmost consternation. The example of the Virginians was almost immediately followed by the North Carolinians. General Rutherford acted with distinguished gallantry until disabled by a musket ball through his thigh, when he was captured. General Butler vainly endeavored to keep the centre of the North Carolina militia in position, but that and a part of the line under General Gregory, who was on the left, fled also. But Gregory himself and part of his brigade, a regiment under Colonel Dixon, remained and fought with great heroism. The Continental troops and this regiment of North Carolinians were left to oppose the British. Having their flank exposed by the flight of the other militia, Dixon's regiment joined the Marylanders, whose left they became, and vied in deeds of courage with their veteran

¹ Williams's narrative, Johnson's *Life of Greene*, Appendix, 495.

comrades. Colonel Dixon himself had seen service, having commanded a Continental regiment under Washington. By his precept and example he infused his own spirit into his troops, who, emulating the ardor of their leader, demonstrated the wisdom of selecting experienced officers to command raw soldiers.¹ This regiment kept together while they had a cartridge to fire. Some of them stood to be bayoneted. General Gregory, who was fighting with them, himself received two such wounds.²

De Kalb and Gist with the Second Maryland Brigade held their ground for some time with heroic firmness; Lord Rawdon, with the volunteers of Ireland, the infantry of the Legion, and the North Carolina Loyalists could not move them. The battle was thus nobly maintained by the two Maryland brigades, the Delaware and North Carolina regiments. Seeing this, Lord Cornwallis ordered a part of the British cavalry, under Major Hanger, to charge their flank, while Colonel Tarleton with the remainder completed their confusion. The British infantry, charging at the same moment, put an end to the contest. Cornwallis's victory was complete. Rout and slaughter ensued in every quarter; all the artillery and a very great number of prisoners fell into his hands. General Gist and about one hundred Continentals escaped in a body by wading through the swamp on the right of the American position. The Delaware regiment was annihilated. Baron De Kalb fought on foot with the Second Maryland Brigade, and fell mortally wounded, receiving eleven wounds. While his life was yet lingering, he was rescued from immediate death by the heroic interposition of Lieutenant Colonel du Buysson, one of his aides-de-camp, who, embracing the fallen General, received into his own

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 187.

² *No. Ca., 1780-81* (Schenck), 91.



body the bayonets pointed at his friend. Major Thomas Pinckney, who, it will be recollected, had been sent out of Charlestown before the surrender, and had joined General Gates as an aide-de-camp, was severely wounded, and fell into the hands of the enemy. The North Carolina militia suffered greatly. More than three hundred were taken, and nearly one hundred were killed and wounded. Strange to say, the Virginia militia, who set the example which produced the destruction of the army, escaped entirely.¹ The pursuit was continued, and none were saved but those who penetrated the swamps which had been deemed impassable. The road was heaped with dead and wounded. Arms, artillery, horses, and baggage were strewn in every direction. The torrent of unarmed militia bore away with it Generals Gates and Caswell. Gates, it is said, first conceived a hope that he might rally at Clermont a sufficient number to cover the retreat of the regulars.² But if he had, he did not stay long to attempt it. No rendezvous was appointed by him, no order was given. He fled as the commonest coward in the army; he fled day and night until he reached Charlotte, seventy miles distant, and being mounted on a celebrated race-horse he outstripped all his followers in the race.³ Nothing could stop him. Lieutenant Colonel Senf, who had been on the expedition with Sumter, met and informed him of the complete success of the expedition, and that Sumter was on the opposite side of the Catawba with one hundred prisoners and forty loaded wagons which he had captured.⁴ But this trifling affair did not interest him. He had no directions to give, no warning to Sumter to

¹ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 185.

² Williams's narrative, Johnson's *Life of Greene*, Appendix, 497.

³ *No. Ca. in 1780-81* (Schenck), 95.

⁴ Williams's narrative, *supra*.

send. Farther on he met Major Davie with his corps on his return from Charlotte, where he had been to escort some of those wounded at Hanging Rock on the 6th to a hospital he had established there, and was now hastening to overtake the army at Rugeley's Mills. A short time before, Davie had arrested as a deserter an American soldier who was in full speed, and learned from him the disaster which had befallen. This unwelcome news was soon confirmed by the appearance of Gates himself in full flight. Gates called to Davie to fall back on Charlotte, or the dragoons would soon be on him. Davie replied that "his men were accustomed to Tarleton and did not fear him." Gates had no time to argue, but pressed on. General Isaac Huger then rode up, and Davie inquired of him how far the directions of General Gates ought to be obeyed, to which Huger replied, "Just so far as you please, for you will never see him again." Davie then sent a gentleman to General Gates to say that if he wished, he would go on and bury his dead. The answer of Gates was: "*I say retreat! Let the dead bury their dead.*"¹ This injunction Davie did not obey, but with the hope of being useful in saving the soldiers, baggage, and stores he continued to advance.² Indeed, he appears at this time to have been the only officer at liberty capable of thinking and acting. Learning from General Huger the probability of Sumter's ignorance of Gates's defeat, he immediately took steps to inform him. He instantly dispatched one of his officers, Captain Martin, with two dragoons to inform Sumter, who was moving up the western bank of the Catawba,³ and to urge him to hasten to Charlotte whither he himself meant

¹ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 194 ; *No. Ca. in 1780-81* (Schenck), 90.

² *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 188.

³ The Wateree here changes its name to Catawba.



to proceed, and to assemble, as he returned, all the force which could be induced to take the field. Davie's message did not reach Sumter a moment too soon.

By the time the British troops had satiated themselves with the slaughter of Gates's men, Cornwallis began to think of Sumter and his party, who were carrying off nearly fifty wagons of supplies and two hundred and fifty prisoners. He realized the importance of destroying or dispersing, if possible, this corps under Sumter, to prevent its becoming a rallying point for the routed army. On the morning of the 17th, therefore, he detached Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton with the Legion cavalry and infantry and the corps of light infantry, in all about three hundred and fifty men, with orders to attack him wherever he could find him. He also, at this same time, sent orders to Lieutenant Colonel Turnbull and Colonel Ferguson on Little River to put their corps in motion immediately, and on their side to pursue and endeavor to attack Sumter.¹ Captain Martin, on the night of the 16th, reached Sumter, who immediately moved with his prisoners and booty, and escaped Turnbull. But having avoided that party of the British, Sumter seems to have indulged in the belief that he was safe, and accordingly encamped on the night of the 17th at Rocky Mount, about thirty miles from Camden, and much nearer Cornwallis. Instead of resting there but a few hours, he did not resume his march until daylight, and then, having only passed Fishing Creek eight miles distant, he again halted. Here, with strange fatuity, but little precautions were taken against surprise. His troops occupied in line of march a bridge contiguous to the north side of the creek, at which place his rear-guard was stationed, and two vedettes were posted at a small distance in its front. Though warned of his danger, Sumter trusted

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 134.

to these slender precautions. His arms were stacked, and his men permitted to indulge at pleasure, some in strolling, some in bathing, and others reposing.

Tarleton had set out early on the morning of the 17th, and marched up the east side of the Wateree, or Catawba, intending to cross it at or near Rocky Mount. Upon the route he overtook some Continentals, and in the afternoon learned that Sumter was moving along the western bank of the river. On his arrival at dusk at the ferry facing Rocky Mount, he saw Sumter's fires about a mile distant from the opposite shore. No camp fires were allowed to be lit by his men, and the boats on the river were secured. No alarm happened, and at daybreak it was discovered that Sumter had decamped. The river was crossed, and Tarleton pursued, but the same causes which, no doubt, had induced Sumter to halt and rest his men, — the exhaustion of the men from the exertion of the previous days, and the intense heat, — affected as well Tarleton's as Sumter's movements. To so great a degree was this that when Tarleton arrived at Fishing Creek at twelve o'clock, he found his command so exhausted that it could be no longer moved forward in a compact and serviceable state. But such considerations never deterred Tarleton. Exactly the same condition of things had occurred in his pursuit of Buford in May, but he had not allowed it to arrest his course. So now selecting one hundred dragoons of the Legion and sixty foot soldiers most able to bear further hardship, mostly of the light infantry, to follow the enemy, and leaving the remainder with the three-pounder at an advantageous piece of ground to cover his retreat in case of accident, he pressed on, following Sumter's tracks upon the road, until they came upon the two vedettes he had posted in front of his rear-guard. These fired upon his advance guard as it entered a valley, and killed one of his dragoons,

upon which his command slew the two vedettes before Tarleton could interpose to obtain information respecting Sumter. A sergeant and four men of the British Legion soon afterwards approached the summit of the neighboring eminence, where, instantly halting, they crouched upon their horses and made a signal to their commanding officer. Tarleton rode forward to the advance guard, and saw the American camp lying before him in the condition described, not in the least alarmed by the fire of the vedettes. His decision and preparation for the attack were made with his habitual promptness. The cavalry and infantry were formed into one line, and giving a general shout, advanced to the charge. The arms and artillery of the Continentals were taken before Woolford's men could be assembled. Consternation immediately ensued throughout the camp. Some resistance was made from behind the wagons in front of the militia, and several conflicts took place before the action was completely decided, but it soon terminated in universal flight.¹ Sumter, who was asleep under a wagon, barely escaped with his life, and in the confusion rode off without saddle, hat, or coat, and reached Major Davie's camp at Charlotte, two days after, unattended by officer, soldier, or servant.²

Thus ended Gates's disastrous campaign. How many Americans perished on the field or surrendered at Camden is not accurately known.³ Tarleton makes the American loss 70 officers and 2000 men killed, wounded, and prisoners, with eight pieces of cannon, several colors, and all their carriages and wagons, containing the stores, ammunition, and baggage of the whole army.⁴ Lord Cornwallis

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 112-114; *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 187-189; Ramsay's *Revolution*, vol. II, 153.

² Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 195.

³ Bancroft, *Hist. of U. S.*, vol. V, 389.

⁴ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 109.

reported that between 800 and 900 were killed.¹ The British loss was 68 killed, 245 wounded, and 11 missing — a total of 324 out of 2239 men engaged in the action.

At Fishing Creek, Sumter lost 150 officers and soldiers killed and wounded, 10 Continental officers and 100 men, many militia officers, and upwards of 200 privates made prisoners; 2 three-pounders, 2 ammunition wagons, 1000 stands of arms, 44 wagons loaded with baggage, rum, and other stores, which had been captured by him two days before and were now recaptured. The loss on the British side was inconsiderable. Captain Charles Campbell was killed, and 15 non-commissioned officers and men were killed and wounded.

These were crushing blows. But the spirit which had now been aroused was indomitable. The defeat of Gates, though so overwhelming, while disappointing, was probably less injurious to the cause in South Carolina than the surprise and slaughter of Sumter's party. For Congress had delayed so long in sending the army that the people had, without waiting for it, learned in a measure to take care of themselves. They had learned that with courage and address they had nothing to fear in meeting even the British regulars — indeed, they were unconsciously improvising a system of warfare in which the technical soldier was not a match for the active, wary woodsman. If Tarleton could find a mass upon which to charge, his onset was fearful, and if Webster could find a regular line formed, his bayonets were no less terrible; but the backwoodsmen were learning that the fire of their unerring rifle from the covert was striking as great a terror in the hearts of the British troops as Tarleton or Webster had ever caused in theirs. And after all, Sumter had been at first successful and had surprised the enemy and made

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 133.



an immense capture. This he had lost when out of the reach, as he thought, of his pursuers. But many of his men had escaped, and he would soon be at the head of them again ready for another venture. In the meanwhile a brilliant stroke had been made on the extreme left of the American line under Shelby and Clarke, and on the right Marion had achieved a success.

CHAPTER XXXI

1780

AFTER the battle at the Old Iron Works, or second battle of Cedar Springs, on the 8th of August, Colonel Ferguson sent his wounded to Musgrove's Mills on the south side of the Enoree River, in what is now Laurens County, and fell back to Culbertson's plantation on Fair Forest. There, on the 10th, he received an express from Colonel Turnbull telling him of Sumter's attack on Hanging Rock on the 6th, with orders to join Turnbull, who, it will be remembered, had in the meanwhile been ordered by Lord Rawdon to evacuate Rocky Mount and join Ferguson at his camp at Little River. Upon the receipt of this express, Ferguson set out, and, marching eastwardly across the present county of Union, crossing Tinker's Creek and Tyger River and fording Broad River at Lyles's Ford, resting in the Mobleys' friendly settlement in what is now Fairfield County, he heard that Gates lay within three miles of Camden with seven thousand men, and that Turnbull had orders to retreat from Rocky Mount. Pushing on, Ferguson marched to Colonel Winn's plantation about eight miles west of Winnsboro, where he halted and lay, awaiting news from Camden.¹ On the American side in this part of the State, soon after the expedition of Clarke and Shelby, ending with the fight at the Old Iron Works, McDowell had advanced into South Carolina and estab-

¹ Allaire's Diary, August 10th to 17th; *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, Appendix, 503, 504.



lished his camp at Smith's Ford on the eastern bank of the Broad River in what is now York County, a position some two miles south of his former camp at Cherokee Ford, just across the State line. McDowell had been kept well informed of Ferguson's movements, and learning that a body of Loyalists were stationed at Musgrove's Mills, the post to which Ferguson had sent those of his men wounded at the Old Iron Works, the idea was conceived that as the road was now open, Ferguson being on the other side of the Broad, this post presented a vulnerable point. The fact that the term of enlistment of Colonel Shelby's men was about to expire, was a pressing motive to that enterprising officer to avail himself of this opportunity to strike another blow before his regiment was disbanded. Colonels Shelby and Clarke were accordingly appointed to lead a party of mountain men to surprise and attack the Loyalists at Musgrove's Mills. With Clarke were Captains James McCall and Samuel Hammond. The day before the expedition started, that is on the 16th of August,—the day on which the battle was fought at Camden,—Colonel James Williams of South Carolina joined the party, with Colonel Brandon, Colonel James Stein, and Major McJunkin, also of this State, all of the old Ninety-Six brigade of militia, and a few followers.

Colonel Williams was a native of Virginia, and had first removed to North and then to South Carolina, where he came in 1773 and settled on Little River. He early took part in the opposition to the measures of the British government, and had served as Lieutenant Colonel of militia in the Williamson expedition against the Cherokees in 1776, and had shared in the battle of Brier Creek, Stono, and at the siege of Savannah in 1779. He had joined Sumter's camp at Clem's Branch in July, but had left it under circumstances which gave rise to unfavorable com-

ment and ultimately to great unpopularity.¹ He was, says the historian of *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, rough, rash, and fearless; and it may be added that his ambition for glory, mingled doubtless with a true love of country, led him, perhaps unconsciously, to the use of means not overscrupulous in the accomplishment of his ends. But while he differed and chaffered with Sumter, Hill, and their associates, yet when the tug of war came he plunged fearlessly into the thickest of the fight, and freely poured out his blood and yielded up his life for his country. Brandon was of Irish descent. Born in Pennsylvania, he had emigrated to what is now Union County. He had also been with Sumter, and had left Sumter with Williams. Stein was, like Brandon, of Irish descent, born in Pennsylvania, and a settler in the same neighborhood. He had, in 1779, served in Georgia, then at Stono and Savannah; but unlike Williams and Brandon, had remained with Sumter and distinguished himself at Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock.

It was agreed by Colonels Shelby, Clarke, and Williams that the command should be conjoint, and a plan of operations was determined upon. Just before sundown on the 17th, that is about the same time that Sumter was going into camp at Rocky Mount, thinking himself safe from Tarleton, two hundred well-mounted adventurous men started from Smith's Ford on the expedition to Musgrove's Mills. Williams and Brandon and their men were well acquainted with the country, and knew the best route by which to reach the enemy. They rode all night, much of the way in a canter, and without making a single stop, crossing Gilky's and Thicketty creeks, Pacolet, Fair Forest, and Tyger rivers, with other lesser streams;²

¹ Hill's narrative, Sumter MSS.

² Draper says the party passed "within three or four miles of Fergu-



they rode some twenty-six miles from Smith's Ford to Brandon's settlement in Fair Forest. Thence it was still twelve or fourteen miles to Musgrove's Mills. It was a hard night's ride.

Arriving near the dawn of day, within a mile nearly north of Musgrove's Ford, says Draper, the Whigs halted at an old Indian field and sent out a party of five or six scouts to reconnoitre the situation. The scouts crossed the mouth of Cedar Shoal Creek, close to the present Spartanburg line, a short distance below Musgrove's, where they forded the Enoree and stealthily approached sufficiently near the Tory camps to make observations. Returning by the same route, when on the top of the river ridge west of Cedar Shoal Creek they encountered a small Tory patrol which had passed over at Musgrove's Ford during their absence and thus gained their rear. Sharp firing ensued, when one of the enemy was killed, two wounded, and two fled precipitately to the Tory camp. Two of the Americans were slightly wounded, who with their fellows now promptly returned to Shelby and Clarke's halting-place, with the intelligence they had gained and the particulars of their skirmish. Upon this Shelby and Clarke took position on a timbered ridge some little distance east of Cedar Shoal Creek and within half a mile of Musgrove's Ford and Mills.

At this juncture a countryman who lived near by came in, giving information that the British had been reënforced the preceding evening by the arrival of Colonel Alexander Innes from Ninety-Six with two hundred men of the Pro-

son's camp, which was at this time at Fair Forest Shoal, in Brandon's settlement." But this is a mistake. By Allaire's Diary it appears Ferguson was at Winn's plantation in what is now Fairfield County, eight miles from Winnsboro, on the night of the 17th. *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, Appendix, 504.

vincial regiments and one hundred Tories destined to join Colonel Ferguson. The regular garrison to which Ferguson had sent his wounded from the Old Iron Works appears to have been under the command of a Major Fraser. Captain Abraham de Peyster of the King's American regiment, as well as the noted partisan, David Fanning of North Carolina, were also there; while Colonel Daniel Clary was encamped with them at the head of the Tories of that region. McKenzie in his *Strictures on Tarleton's History* states that the detachment commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Innes consisted of a company of the New Jersey volunteers, a captain's command of De Lancey's (New York Royalists), and about one hundred men of the South Carolina regiment mounted,¹ which was a part of Innes's own command. This detachment was therefore probably three hundred men; and if the information upon which the expedition was formed, namely, that the garrison originally was two hundred strong, was correct, the whole force was now about five hundred men. So minute were the circumstances of the information communicated by the countryman that no doubt was entertained of the truth. To march and attack the enemy under these circumstances appeared to be rash, while to attempt a retreat, wearied and broken down as their horses were, seemed equally dangerous. Colonel Shelby and his associates in this dilemma promptly concluded that they had no alternative but to fight. Securing their horses in their rear, they improvised a breastwork of logs and brushwood, and determined to make the best defence possible. These lines were formed across the road, at least three hundred yards in length along the ridge in a semicircle, and both protected and concealed by a wood. Old logs, fallen trees, and brush were hurried into

¹ *Strictures on Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's History*, 25.

place, so that in thirty minutes they had a very respectable protection breast high. Shelby occupied the right, Clarke the left, and Williams the centre. A party of some twenty horsemen were placed on each flank, shielded as much as possible from the enemy's observation, — Josiah Culbertson having the command of that on Shelby's right, while Colonel Clarke had a reserve of forty men within calling distance.

The firing of the scouting party and the speedy arrival of the fleeing patrol put the Tory camp in wild commotion. Colonel Innes, Major Fraser, and other officers who had their headquarters at Edward Musgrove's residence held a hurried council. Innes was for marching over the river at once and catching the rebels before they had time to retreat, while others advised delay, at least until a party of one hundred men who had gone on a patrol eight miles below near Jones's Ford should return. But Innes's counsels prevailed, lest they should miss so fine an opportunity "to bag" a scurvy lot of ragamuffins, as they spoke of the adventurous Americans. So leaving one hundred men in camp as a reserve, preparations were made for an immediate advance.

In the meanwhile Captain Shadrach Inman, who had already distinguished himself in Georgia fighting in the American cause, was sent forward with about twenty-five mounted men with orders to fire upon and provoke the British to cross the ford, and gradually to draw them on to the line prepared by Shelby and Clarke. This stratagem, which was the suggestion of Inman himself, worked admirably. The Captain kept up a show of fighting, while the British infantry pressed on by Innes were elated at their success in driving him before them at the point of the bayonet. While yet two hundred yards distant from the American breastwork, they hastily formed into line of

battle, and advancing fifty yards nearer they opened a heavy fire, but generally overshot their antagonists. The frontiersmen availed themselves of the protection of the trees, a fence extending along the road, and of the rudely constructed breastwork. They were cautioned to reserve their fire "till they could see the whites of the Tories' eyes," or as another account has it "till they could distinguish the buttons on their clothes," nor even then to discharge their rifles until orders were given, when each man was "to take his object sure." These orders were strictly obeyed.

The British centre on which Inman made his feigned attacks, seeing him retire in apparent confusion, pressed forward under beat of drum and bugle charge in pursuit, but in considerable disorder, shouting for King George. On approaching within seventy yards of the American lines, they were unexpectedly met with a deadly fire, from which they at first recoiled. Their superiority in numbers, however, enabled them to continue their attack, notwithstanding the advantage which the breastwork gave the Americans. A strong force composed of the Provincials, led on by Innes and Fraser forming the enemy's left wing, drove at the point of the bayonet the right wing of the Americans under Shelby from their breastwork. Then ensued a desperate struggle — Shelby's men contending against large odds, and the right flank of his right wing gradually giving way, whilst his left flank maintained its connection with the centre at the breastwork. The left wing opposed to the Tories retained its position, and seeing Shelby in need of succor, Clarke sent his small reserve to his aid, which proved a most timely relief. At this critical moment, as Innes was forcing Shelby's right flank, the British leader was badly wounded, fell from his horse, and was carried back, shot by one of the Watauga volunteers, who exultingly exclaimed, "I've killed their com-

mander!" Upon this Shelby rallied his men, who, with a frontier Indian yell, furiously rushed upon the enemy and gradually forced them back. Culbertson's flanking party acted a most conspicuous part on this occasion.

In this desperate contest one British captain was killed, and five out of the seven of the surviving officers of their Provincial corps were wounded. Besides Colonel Innes, Major Fraser was also wounded by a Watauga rifleman, and was seen to reel and fall from his horse. Captain Campbell together with Lieutenants Camp and Chew were also among the wounded. The Tories failing to make any impression on Clarke's line, and having already lost several of their officers and many of their men, began to show signs of wavering, when Captain Hawsey, a noted leader, while striving to reanimate them, was shot down. In the midst of the confusion that followed, Clarke and his brave men, following Shelby's example, pushed forth from their barrier, yelling, shooting, and slashing on every hand. It was in this turmoil that the Tory, Colonel Clary, had his horse's bridle seized on both sides of his head at the same moment by two stalwart Whigs. He had, however, the ingenuity and presence of mind to extricate himself from his perilous situation by exclaiming, "D—n you, don't you know your own officers!" He was instantly released and fled at full speed.

The British and Tories were now in full retreat, closely followed by the mountaineers. It was in the excitement of this pursuit that Captain Inman was killed while pressing the enemy and fighting them hand to hand. He received seven shots from the Tories, one a musket ball piercing his forehead. Draper justly observes that great credit is due to Captain Inman for the successful manner in which he brought on the action, and the aid he rendered in conducting it to a triumphant issue.

The yells and screeches of the retreating British and Tories, it is said, as they ran through the woods and over the hills to the river, loudly intermingled with the shouts of their pursuers, together with the groans of the dying and wounded, were terrific and heartrending in the extreme. The Tories ceased to make any show of defence when halfway from the breastwork to the ford. The retreat then became a rout; with reckless speed they hastened to the river, through which they rushed with the wildest fright, hotly pursued by the victorious Americans with sword and rifle, killing, wounding, or capturing all who came in their way. Many of the Tories were shot down as they were hastening pell-mell across the rocky ford.

While the firing was yet kept up on the north side of the Enoree, an intrepid frontiersman, Captain Sam Moore, led a small party of ten or twelve men up the river, and crossing the stream at Head's Ford rushed down upon a portion of the enemy with such impetuosity and audacity as to impress them with the belief that they were but the vanguard of a much larger force, when they incontinently fled and Moore rejoined his victorious friends over the river.

The patrolling party of the British which had been down the river near Jones's Ford heard the firing and came dashing back at full speed. Reining up their panting steeds before Musgrove's house, the commanding officer inquired what was the matter. Learning of the battle which had terminated so disastrously some thirty minutes before, he pressed on and crossed the ford; but he was too late. The victorious Americans had retreated with their prisoners, leaving the British troopers the melancholy duty of conveying their wounded friends to the hospital at Musgrove's.



It was a complete rout on the part of the British and Tories. They seem to have apprehended what was in fact the purpose of the Whig leaders; namely, to push on at once to Ninety-Six, then believed to be in a weak and defenceless condition. Captain Kerr, upon whom the command now devolved, finding that resistance would be in vain and without hope of success, ordered a retreat, which was effected, and they crossed the river.¹ A part of the force under the command of Captain de Peyster retreated a mile and a quarter, where they encamped for the remainder of the day, and in the night marched off toward Ninety-Six.

As Kerr had anticipated that they would do, Shelby, Clarke, and Williams resolved at once to improve the advantages they had gained, pursue the demoralized Tories, and make a dash for Ninety-Six, which they believed they could easily reach before night, as it was only twenty-five miles distant. The men were ordered to return to their horses and mount them. While the men were doing this, and Shelby was consulting Clarke as to the move, Francis Jones, an express from Colonel McDowell, rode up in great haste with a letter in his hand from General Caswell, telling of Gates's total defeat near Camden, apprising McDowell of the great disaster, and advising him and all officers commanding detachments to get out of the way or they would be cut off; McDowell sent word that he would at once move toward Gilbert Town, as the present town of Lincolnton was then called. General Caswell's handwriting was familiar to Shelby, so he knew that the information was true, and not a Tory device to frighten him away. Clarke, Williams, and himself recognized the danger of their own situation. Ferguson and Turnbull,

¹ McKenzie's *Strictures on Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton's History*, 25; McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 316.

who had formed a junction, now relieved of any concern for the main army under Cornwallis, were free to retrace Ferguson's march, recross the Broad and get in their rear, cutting them off from McDowell, who had himself abandoned his camp at Smith's Ford and retired into North Carolina. Lieutenant Colonel Cruger at Ninety-Six would, no doubt, now that he too must have learned of their victory at Camden, be coming to the assistance of Innes. The brilliant prospects of the moment before were at once dispelled. Far from pursuing the advantages of the signal victory they had here gained, the question now was how they could secure their own retreat. It was determined in a hasty council, while on horseback, that they would take a route through the backwoods to avoid and escape Ferguson, and join Colonel McDowell on his retreat toward Gilbert Town.

Hurriedly gathering the prisoners together and distributing one to every three of the Americans, who conveyed them alternately on horseback, requiring each captive to carry his gun divested of its flint, the whole cavalcade was ready in a few moments to move on their retreat, as they knew Ferguson would be speedily apprised of their success and make a strenuous effort as he did at Wofford's Iron Works to regain their prisoners. The Whig troopers thus encumbered hurried rapidly away in a northwestwardly direction, instead of a northeastwardly one toward their old encampment. They passed over a rough broken country, crossing the forks of the Tyger, leaving Ferguson on the right, heading their course toward their own friendly mountains. As they expected, they were rapidly pursued by a detachment of Ferguson's men. Wearied as they and their horses were, with scarcely any refreshment for either, yet Shelby's indomitable energy permitted them no rest while danger lurked in their way. Late in the evening



of the 18th, Ferguson's party reached the spot where the Whigs had less than thirty minutes before fed their tired horses; but not knowing how long they had been gone, and their own detachment being exhausted, they relinquished further pursuit. Not aware of this the Americans kept on their tedious retreat all night and the following day, passing the North Tyger and into the confines of North Carolina, sixty miles from the battle-field. In less than three days this gallant party of two hundred had marched one hundred miles and fought a battle, bringing off with them seventy prisoners. It is to be remarked, says Colonel Hill in his narrative, that during the advance of forty and the retreat of fifty or sixty miles, the Americans never stopped to eat, but made use of peaches and green corn for their support. The excessive fatigue to which they were subjected for two nights and two days broke down every officer so that their faces and eyes were so swollen and became so bloated that they were scarcely able to see.¹

This action, says the same author, was one of the hardest fought with small arms during the Revolution. The smoke was so thick as to hide a man at the distance of two hundred yards. Shelby is quoted as describing this battle as "the hardest and best-fought action he was ever in," attributing this valor and persistency to "the great number of officers who were with him as volunteers."² The Provincials and the Tories on the British side fought bravely. Their dragoons, but lately raised, behaved with much gallantry, fighting on the left with Innes. They all exhibited the training they had received under that superior master Ferguson.³

The British loss in this affair was 63 killed, about

¹ Hill's narrative, Sumter MSS.

² *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 115.

³ *Ibid.*

90 wounded, and 70 prisoners — a total of 223 out of 400 or 500, probably one-half of all engaged; an unusually large proportion. The American loss was only four killed and eight or nine wounded.¹ The disparity in killed and wounded was attributed to over-shooting on the part of the British and the protection the trees and breastwork afforded to the Americans, and still more to the skill of the frontiersmen in the use of the rifle. After the battle was over the women and children from many miles around came in to visit the ground, — some, it is said, from mere curiosity, and some even for plunder; but for most it was a sad errand. This was a Tory region — the few Whigs in it had left from motives of personal safety or had joined Sumter or some other popular leader. The most of the visitors, therefore, were Tory women, seeking among the dead and wounded for their fathers, husbands, sons, or brothers. It was a painful and touching scene to witness them turning over the bodies in love and dread, to find their dear ones among the slain or suffering.²

Marion on the extreme right of the American line, believing, like Sumter, that the true way to encourage and

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 115.

² It is remarkable that few American or British historians have at all noticed this important and hard-fought battle. Hill in his narrative complains that none of the historians who have written of the Revolution in the State have mentioned it; and McKenzie in his *Strictures on Tarleton's History* charges that author with great remissness in omitting any notice of it. It is not mentioned by Ramsay in either of his histories of the State, nor by Johnson in his *Life of Greene*, nor by Lee in his *Memoirs of the War of 1776*, nor by Bancroft, nor by Roosevelt in *The Winning of the West*. Captain Hammond's account of it is published in Johnson's *Traditions*, and it is briefly described by McCall in his *Hist. of Ga.* Draper gives a full and particular account of it in his *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, and there is an account of it in Hill's narrative, Sumter MSS.



to command his partisans was to find employment, had not been idle, and their spirits had begun to revive. Returning to Port's Ferry, he threw up a redoubt on the east bank of the Pee Dee, on which he mounted two old iron field-pieces to awe the Tories. On the 17th of August—the day on which Shelby, Clarke, and Williams started upon their expedition—he detached Major Peter Horry with orders to take command of four companies, Bonneau's, Mitchell's, Benison's, and Lenuds's, and to destroy all the boats and canoes on the Santee River from the Lower Ferry to Lenuds's; to post guards so as to prevent all communication with Charlestown, and to procure him twenty-five weight of gunpowder, ball or buck-shot, and flints in proportion. The latter part of this order shows how scanty were the means of his defence.¹ Marion himself marched to the upper part of the Santee with the same object in view with which he had intrusted Horry. On his way he received intelligence of the defeat of Gates at Camden; but this did not intimidate him. On the contrary, keeping the news of the disaster to himself, not communicating it to any one, he pressed on toward Nelson's Ferry, across which all communication between Camden and Charlestown must pass. Approaching near the Ferry on the night of the 20th of August, he was informed by his scouts that a guard with a party of prisoners were on their way to Charlestown, and had stopped at a house at the Great Savannah, or swamp, on the main road, east of the river, that is, in the southernmost part of the present county of Clarendon, near where the line between the counties of Berkeley and Orangeburgh begins. A little before day the next morning he gave the command of sixteen men to Colonel Hugh Horry, with orders to gain possession of the road at the pass of Horse Creek, which runs through the

¹ *Documentary Hist. of So. Ca.* (Gibbes. Columbia, 1853), 11.

swamp two miles from and parallel with the Santee, while the main body under his own command would gain and attack them in their rear. In taking his position Colonel Horry unfortunately advanced too near to a sentinel, who fired upon him. Horry, thus discovered, did not hesitate a moment, but rushed up to the house and found the British arms piled before the door. These he seized, when the whole party surrendered. Twenty-two British regulars of the Sixty-third Regiment, two Tories, one captain, and a subaltern were taken, and 150 of the Maryland line liberated. Marion reported one man killed and Major Benison wounded. But the man, Josiah Cockfield, who was shot through the breast, lived to fight bravely again and to receive another wound in the service of the State.

Marion after this affair marched back to Port's Ferry, he naturally supposing that the Continentals whom he had so gallantly rescued would to a man have joined his small party. But they could not be prevailed to shoulder a musket. "Where is the use," said they, "of fighting when all is lost?" All but three deserted him. Two of these were Sergeants McDonald and Davis, who afterwards distinguished themselves in his service.¹ By the exertions of Marion and his officers the drooping spirits of his men were again revived, and another exploit was soon achieved.

About the 27th of August, when having only one hundred and fifty men, Marion, learning of the approach of Major Wemyss above Kingstree at the head of the Sixty-third Regiment and a body of Tories under Major Harrison, instantly dispatched Major James at the head of a company of volunteers, with orders to reconnoitre and count them. Calling in Major Peter Horry, Marion crossed Lynch's Creek and advanced to give battle. The night after Major

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 47, 55; Weems's *Life of Marion*, 137; Ramsay's *So. Ca.*, vol. II, 399.

James received his orders, somewhere near the present site of the town of Kingstree in Williamsburg County, he hid himself in a thicket close to the line of march of Major Wemyss and his party. The moon was shining brightly, and he was thus enabled to estimate quite accurately the forces, of the enemy. Having satisfied himself upon this point, James burst from his hiding-place as their rear-guard passed, and took some prisoners.¹ Weems states on the authority of General Peter Horry that of forty-nine men who composed their company, they killed and took prisoners about thirty.²

On the same night about an hour before day Marion met Major James; the officers immediately dismounted and retired to consult, while the men sat on their horses in a state of anxious suspense. The conference was long and animated. At the end of it an order was given to direct the march back to Lynch's Creek. In response, says James, a groan was heard along the whole line. A bitter cup had now been mingled for the people of Williamsburg and Pee Dee, and they were doomed to drain it to the dregs. Major James reported the British force to be double that of Marion's, and Gainey's party of Tories in their rear had always been estimated at five hundred. A retreat was deemed prudent. Marion recrossed the Pee Dee at Port's Ferry, and the next evening, the 28th of August, commenced his retreat into North Carolina. About half of his party left him. They could not leave their property and their families at the discretion of an irritated, relentless enemy. Colonels Hugh Horry, John Erwin, and John Baxter, Major Peter Horry, Major John Vanderhorst, Major John James, Major Benison, and about sixty others continued with their chief. Marion's march

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 55; *Hist. of Williamsburg Church*, 54.

² *Life of Marion* (Weems), 141.

was for some time much impeded by the two field-pieces which he attempted to take along, so after crossing the Little Pee Dee he wheeled them off to the side of the road and left them in a swamp. He never afterwards encumbered himself with artillery. By marching day and night he arrived at Avery's Mill on Downing Creek, the eastern branch of the Little Pee Dee River. From this point he detached Major James with a small party of volunteers to return to South Carolina to gain intelligence and procure recruits. He continued his march and pitched his camp for some time on the east side of the White Marsh near the head of the Waccamaw River in North Carolina.

There was now no organized body of troops in South Carolina. But Marion had abandoned neither the cause nor his State. He was soon to return to renew the contest in the swamps of the Pee Dee and Santee. Davie's faithful little band was still with him at Charlotte, and around Sumter were gathering the remnants of his dispersed corps, and gaining new recruits among the refugees from South Carolina, for the Whigs had not lost confidence in their leader, despite the disaster at Fishing Creek. Farther to the west Shelby and Clarke and Williams just beyond the border were devising new schemes of enterprise to invade again the State of which the British now appeared to have entire possession.



CHAPTER XXXII

1780

LORD CORNWALLIS had achieved a great victory—a victory of which he had been by no means confident on his arrival at Camden on the night between the 13th and 14th of August. Indeed, it is clear from his dispatch to Lord George Germain that upon his arrival there he had found the situation quite as serious and alarming as Lord Rawdon's dispatches to him had represented them. So critical did he consider the position that he at once determined he had but the option of one of two decisive courses: either to retire or attempt the enemy.¹ This alternative he weighed, and seeing but little to lose by defeat and much to gain by a victory, with the decision of his character he at once resolved to risk a battle. By the superior organization and discipline of his own troops, upon which he had much relied, and by the utter want of organization on the part of the Americans and reckless folly of Gates, he had succeeded beyond his most sanguine hopes. But now that he had won his victory, and had had time to count his gains, his lordship began to realize that they were not as great as he had anticipated. He had defeated and destroyed the army which Congress had so reluctantly sent to the assistance of South Carolina. But was the State conquered? To this question he could give no satisfactory answer.

On June 4th, upon turning over the command to him, Sir Henry Clinton had written to Lord George Germain

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 129.

that he might venture to assert that there were few men in South Carolina who were not either our prisoners or in arms with us. But now how stood it at the end of three months? True, the original leaders of the Revolution were all prisoners in Charlestown; and the whole of the State's Continental soldiers, with a large part of those of Virginia and North Carolina, were in prison ships or cantonments in Christ Church Parish. But in their place had sprung up others all over the State. The British army had captured the Continentals and dispersed the militia which the State authorities had brought into the field. But now had arisen an entirely new class — men who were fighting for liberty and love of country; for a liberty the desire for which had been in a great measure inspired, not from the original civil cause of dispute, but from the insolence, tyranny, and cruelty with which his Majesty's military officers had endeavored to enslave the people. These men, without commissions even from the State, without organization under any form of law, without arms or ammunition other than the guns and rifles with which they hunted the fields for game, forming themselves into voluntary bands, choosing their leaders for each special occasion, and with them consulting and deciding upon each particular move, had suddenly appeared in front of every division of his army, broken in upon his communications, and dauntlessly assailed his posts. In six weeks, from the 12th of July to the 27th of August, sixteen battles, great and small, had been fought in South Carolina, and in every one of these, except that of Camden, the Americans had been the assailants. And these fifteen attacks upon his outposts had been made in each instance by voluntary bands, who generally dispersed as soon as the object of the particular expedition had been accomplished. But the number and audacity of these attacks

were not the most alarming feature of the situation as he surveyed it. His field returns discovered losses which he could not afford. True, at Camden he at one blow of his vigorous arm destroyed the Continental army from which the South Carolinians had hoped for great assistance, and had killed, wounded, and taken prisoners of them 2070; but of these Marion had promptly recaptured 150, besides taking 33 of one of his best regiments, reducing the results of the victory to a loss to the Americans of 1920 men, at a cost to himself, with those lost at Camden (324) and those taken by Marion (33) of 357 of his best troops; so that his net gain from this battle was the infliction of a comparative loss to his enemy of 1563 men. On the other hand, the Americans had inflicted a loss upon him in the other fifteen engagements of 1105, at a cost to them of 638, leaving to him the comparative loss of 467 men. In casting up these figures of men won and lost there was, it is true, the handsome balance in his favor of 1096. But there was an aspect of this account which was far from encouraging. Eliminating the battle of Camden, in which not a South Carolinian had been engaged except two officers on the general staff,¹ the people of the State, with their immediate neighbors of North Carolina and Georgia, had inflicted a loss upon his force of more than 1000 men, at a loss to themselves of little more than 600. Examining these returns still more closely, his lordship must have observed that in the twelve assaults upon his posts made by these volunteer bands, they had killed, wounded, and taken nearly 500² of his troops, at a loss to themselves not a third as great.³ That except in the battle of Camden itself the greatest loss to the Americans had been at Fishing Creek, where Sumter had been surprised and lost 460

¹ General Isaac Huger and Major Thomas Pinckney.

² 402.

³ 162.

men; but that on the very next day Shelby, Clarke, and Williams, with a loss to themselves of but 13 men, had killed, wounded, and taken 223, and the day after Marion had further added a capture of 183, with a loss of but two wounded, thus bringing matters again nearly to equality. The results of the uprisings during these six weeks completely dissipated the fond illusion that South Carolina was a conquered province.¹

There was another cause which, in this connection, added greatly to Cornwallis's anxiety; and that was, besides the losses which the volunteers were inflicting upon his men, the climate was proving as unfriendly to them. It has been seen how the Seventy-first Regiment had suffered at the Cheraws, 100 sick of them having been sent away by Major McArthur when he was ordered to leave that post, who fell into the hands of the Whigs. The return of this regiment on the 15th of August, the eve of the

¹ Governor Roosevelt in his *Winning of the West* thus contemptuously disposes of what was done in South Carolina during this time: "Except for an occasional guerilla party there was not a single organized body of American troops left south of Gates's broken and dispirited army. All the Southern lands lay at the feet of the conqueror. The British leaders, overbearing and arrogant, held almost unchecked sway throughout the Carolinas and Georgia, and looking northward they made ready for the conquest of Virginia. Their right flank was covered by the waters of the ocean, their left by the high mountain barrier chains, beyond which stretched the interminable forest, and they had as little thought of danger from the one side as the other" (251, 252).

The Governor can himself be as rash in his statements at times in regard to things of which he does not know as other authors whom he so severely criticises as he writes. The truth is, there was no moment from Huck's defeat at Williamson's plantation on the 12th of July when a British outpost was not in danger of attack, and in constant apprehension of it. There was, it is true, but one regularly organized corps, but there was that one — Davie's gallant little band — and around that Sumter was gathering his partisan corps; and Marion was organizing his without even such a nucleus, and so were Clarke and Williams in the west.



battle of Camden, told how their ranks had been thinned by death. The First Battalion mustered but 144, and the Second but 110 men present for duty. Major Wemyss's regiment, the Sixty-third, was greatly diminished by sickness.¹ In his dispatch to the government at home, Cornwallis gave as the compelling reason which induced him to risk the battle, that if he had retreated, he must have abandoned 800 sick at Camden. The effect of the climate was telling severely upon his officers. Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton had been sick of fever, and kept out of the field during the month before the battle, in which time much had been gained by the Whigs. He was now in the field again, but was soon to have a relapse, which would again deprive his lordship of his services. He himself was soon to suffer in an important emergency from the same cause. The unerring rifle of the backwoodsman, and the malaria of the swamps and rivers of Carolina, were thus telling heavily against him.

There was still another serious cause of disquietude and distrust. Sir Henry Clinton had inaugurated the attempt to subdue one part of the Americans by means of the other, so much urged by the people in England, and had left his lordship to carry it out. A large part of his force, therefore, consisted of Provincial regiments, that is, regiments enlisted in America. Several of these had been brought from the North. The British Legion under Tarleton had been organized at New York. Lord Rawdon's regiment, the Royal volunteers of Ireland, had been recruited and organized in Philadelphia while the British were in possession.² Ferguson's Provincials, or Rangers,

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 137, 138, 191.

² The field officers of the regiment were Colonel Lord Rawdon, Lieutenant Colonel John Watson, Majors Despard and Joseph Campbell. "Battle of Eutaw Springs," *The United Service Magazine*, September, 1881, 323.

were not a permanent corps, but made up for special service from three other Provincial corps, — the King's American regiment raised in and around New York, the Queen's Rangers from Connecticut, and the New Jersey volunteers.¹ Turnbull's regiment, the New York volunteers or King's Third American Regiment, was from New York, organized in 1776, had fought with Montgomery in 1777, and was at the siege of Savannah in 1778. De Lancey's Provincial battalion was also from New York. Hamilton's and Bryan's regiments were from North Carolina. In addition to these there were two more Provincial regiments raised principally, if not altogether, in South Carolina and Georgia. These were Lieutenant Colonel Browne's, which had fought so gallantly at the siege of Savannah, and another raised by Lieutenant Colonel Innes, the former Secretary of Lord William Campbell, who had been commissioned in January, 1780. It has been seen what severe measures Lord Rawdon had considered it necessary to take to prevent desertion from his regiment, the Royal volunteers from Ireland. Ferguson's were picked troops and were reliable, and Browne's corps had fought as gallantly at Hanging Rock as they had at Savannah. Turnbull's New Yorkers had withstood Sumter's attack at Rocky Mount, but the North Carolina Loyalists had been panic stricken at Hanging Rock, and Innes's South Carolinians routed at Musgrove's Mills. But these corps were all, with the exception of Bryan's North Carolina Loyalists, composed of enlisted men, hirelings of the class from which common soldiers were usually obtained, and were good or bad troops, as they were well or ill disciplined in camp and handled in battle. Though doubtless inferior to the British regulars of the line, such as the Seventy-first and other

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 114, note, 287; "The Battle of Eutaw Springs," *The United Service Magazine*, September, 1881, 311.



regiments under his command, they were, upon the whole, fairly reliable. But neither these nor his regulars could be recruited in this region; and the Loyal militia upon which Sir Henry Clinton's attempted policy was based and entirely depended, he found to be utterly untrustworthy. The two instances in which, after having been organized and armed as such, a large number had gone over in a body to the enemy—the cases of Colonel Lisle's battalion and Colonel Mills's regiment—were but conspicuous examples, on a large scale, of what was going on all the time in smaller numbers and single cases. The revolt was spreading—those who were before indifferent were now siding with the Whigs, and many who had joined the Royal standard were deserting to the Americans. Sumter and Marion and Davie and Williams had, by their examples, aroused the patriotism of the people to resist the invaders of the country, regardless of the original cause of the war. It was not now a question of a tax upon tea or representation in Parliament, but of resistance to the tyranny, cruelty, and brutality of the British army. Those leaders had kindled a flame which was now ablaze from the mountain to the seacoast.

Confronted with this unexpected rising of the people he had supposed to be conquered, and alarmed at his own situation, anger seems to have assumed the place of Lord Cornwallis's better judgment. A few days after the battle of Camden he issued the following vehement, unjust, and unwise order to the commandants of the several posts:¹—

“I have given orders that all the inhabitants of this Province who have subscribed and have taken part in the revolt should be punished with the greatest rigour; and also those who will not turn out that they may be imprisoned and their whole property taken from them

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution*, 157.

or destroyed. I have likewise ordered that compensation should be made out of their estates to the persons who have been injured or oppressed by them. I have ordered in the most positive manner that every militiaman who has borne arms with us and afterwards joined the enemy shall be immediately hanged. I desire you will take the most rigorous measures to punish the rebels in the district in which you command, and that you obey in the strictest manner the directions I have given in this letter relative to the inhabitants of this country.

(Signed)

“CORNWALLIS.”

Steadman, the British historian, usually so fair in his comments, justifies this order of Lord Cornwallis because of the number of militia who had joined in the revolt after exchanging their paroles for protections and swearing allegiance to the British government.¹ Doubtless all who had taken protections and renewed their allegiance to the British government and afterwards joined the Whigs, took their lives in their hands, and were amenable to the utmost severity of the British commander, should they fall into his hands. But the order did not restrict the rigor of punishment it authorized and enjoined to that class. It embraced not only those, but all who had “subscribed.” It therefore applied to those who had “subscribed” their paroles as well as those who had taken protection; and with regard to them this author himself had in a few pages before² condemned the folly and injustice of Sir Henry Clinton’s proclamation of the 3d of June which, without the consent of those who had given them, abrogated their paroles, and in one instant converted them either into loyal subjects or rebels. It cannot be denied that by this proclamation Sir Henry Clinton had released these persons from the paroles they had subscribed, and it was these which Lord Cornwallis now ordered to be punished as traitors for having availed themselves of the

¹ *Hist. of the Am. War* (Steadman), vol. II, 214.

² *Ibid.*, 198.

release he had forced upon them. But even in the cases of those who were charged with having gone farther and taken protection, and then returned to revolt, it was but proper that some judicial examination should be had upon reliable testimony to determine the fact of guilt. But officers receiving the order considered themselves bound by no such requirement. At Camden, under the very eyes of Cornwallis himself, Samuel Andrews, Richard Tucker, John Miles, Josiah Gayle, Eleazer Smith, with others whose names were unknown, were taken out of jail and hanged without any ceremony whatsoever; others were indulged with a hearing before a court-martial instituted by his lordship for the trial of prisoners; but the evidences against them were not examined on oath, and slaves were both permitted and encouraged to accuse their masters. Not only at Camden, but in other parts of South Carolina and at Augusta in Georgia the same bloody tragedies were enacted, and many of the inhabitants fell sacrifices to this new mode of warfare.¹

The Loyalist chiefs were as much alarmed as Cornwallis at the unexpected uprising of the Whigs in the face of the British army, and at the spreading contagion of enthusiasm aroused by the example of their leaders. To meet this Ferguson called a convention of the Loyalist militia to enter into a new covenant and agreement of allegiance. Five days after the battle of Musgrove's Mills, while he was encamped at Fair Forest in the Brandon settlement, the meeting took place there. At this meeting the North Carolina battalion and the six South Carolina militia battalions — Cuninghams', Kirkland's, Clary's, King's, Gibbs's, and Plummer's — were represented, and the following agreement was entered into: —

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 158.

"That every man who does not assemble when required in defence of his country in order to act with the other good subjects serving in the militia, exposes his comrades to unnecessary danger, abandons the Royal cause, and acts a treacherous part to the country in which he lives; and it is the unanimous opinion that whoever quits his battalion or disobeys the order of the officers commanding is a worse traitor and enemy to his King and country than those rebels who again in arms after having taken protection and deserves to be treated accordingly; and we do therefore empower the officers commanding in camp, as well as the officers commanding our several battalions of militia, from time to time to cause the cattle and grain of all such officers and men as basely fail to assemble and muster as required in times of public danger, or who quit their battalion without leave, to be brought to camp for the use of those who pay their debt to the country by their personal services; and we do also empower the said commanding officers, and do require them, that they will secure the arms and horses of such delinquents and put them in possession of men who are better disposed to use them in defence of their country, and that they will bring such traitors to trial in order that they may be punished as they deserve and turned out of the militia with disgrace. . . .

"It was also unanimously resolved by every officer and man now in camp of all the above-named regiments that whenever a man shall neglect to assemble, and to do his duty in the militia when summoned for public service, shall be made to serve in the regular troops, it being the unanimous opinion of every man present that it is the duty of all who call themselves subjects to assist in the defence of the country one way or the other."¹

The condition of the inhabitants of Charlestown was somewhat different from that of those of the country. By the terms of the capitulation (Article 9), with respect to their property in the city, they were allowed the same terms as were granted to the militia, which (Article 4) were that as long as they observed their paroles they should be secure from being molested in their property.

¹ This paper was found by Colonel Sevier at King's Mountain in the possession of a Tory colonel. Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*, 216; *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 143.

But those of them who owned estates in the country had no security by the capitulation for any property beyond the lines, unless they submitted and returned to their allegiance. It seems to have been assumed that the citizens of the town were not included in the proclamation of the 3d of June, and so were not required by it to choose between the alternative of accepting the condition of loyal subjects or declaring themselves enemies. Other methods were therefore devised to compel them to renew their allegiance to the King. The addressors of Sir Henry Clinton were said to have instigated these measures, complaining to the British rulers "that none had proper encouragement to return to their allegiance while prisoners were suffered to remain with their families and enjoy privileges which in their opinion should be monopolized by the friends of the Royal government."¹ To oblige these paroled citizens in the town to return to their allegiance, a succession of orders had been issued, each abridging their privileges. Subjects were allowed to sue for their debts before a Board of Police, which was established and presided over by James Simpson, Intendant.² Paroled citizens were denied all benefit of that court; though they were liable to suits themselves, they had no security for the payment of debts due them but the honor of their debtors. The limits of their paroles after the surrender of the town were much more restricted than they had expected. They were restrained from going out of the lines or on the water without special permission; and this when applied for was sometimes wantonly refused, and on other occasions granted only on the payment of money. Mechanics and other artisans were allowed for some time

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 118.

² James Simpson was the last attorney general under the Royal government (*Hist. of So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* [McCrary], 804).

after the surrender to follow their respective occupations; but as they could not control payment for their services, repeated losses soon convinced them of the convenience of accepting British protection; indeed, they were soon prohibited from plying their trades without permission. Those inhabitants who were shopkeepers were, while prisoners, encouraged to make purchases from the British merchants who came with the conquering army, and after they had contracted large debts of this kind were precluded by proclamation from selling the goods they had purchased unless they assumed the name and character of British subjects.

Great numbers in all communities, observes Ramsay,¹ are wholly indifferent as to the form of government under which they live. They can always turn with the times and submit with facility to the present ruling power, whatsoever it may be. The depressed condition of American affairs in the summer of 1780 induced the belief among many that Congress, from necessity or otherwise, had abandoned the idea of contending for the Southern States. The resolutions of that body disavowing this imputation were carefully concealed from the prisoners. Many believing that South Carolina would finally remain a British province, and determined to save their estates under every form of government, concluded that the sooner they submitted the less they would lose. A party always sincerely attached to the Royal government, though they had conformed to the laws of the State, rejoiced in the overthrow of the Revolutionists and sincerely returned to their allegiance; but their number was inconsiderable in comparison with the multitude who were obliged by necessity or induced by convenience to accept of British protection.²

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 120.

² *Ibid.*, 120, 121.



Brigadier General Patterson had, since the surrender, up to this time been Commandant of Charlestown. He was now relieved on account of ill health, and Lieutenant Colonel Nisbit Balfour, of his Majesty's Twenty-third Regiment, was appointed in his place.¹ This gentleman, says Ramsay, having raised himself in the army by his obsequious devotedness to the humors and pleasures of Sir William Howe, displayed in the exercise of the new office the frivolous self-importance and insolence which are natural to little minds when puffed up by sudden elevation and employed on functions to which their abilities are not equal. By the subversion of every trace of the popular government, without any proper civil government in its place, he, with a few coadjutors, assumed and exercised legislative, judicial, and executive powers over citizens in the same manner as over the common soldiery under their command. Proclamations were issued by his authority, which militated as well against the principles of the British constitution as those of justice, equity, and humanity. For light offences, and on partial and insufficient information, citizens were confined by his orders, and that often without trial.²

All the original leaders of the Revolution who were yet living, with the exception of a very few who had taken protection, were still prisoners upon parole, but confined

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 157, 158.

² Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 263, 264.

Simus, in his historical novel *Katharine Walton*, observes that the record which fails to tell of his achievements in battle is somewhat more copious in other matters. This was Colonel Balfour's reputation in South Carolina; but it must be observed, nevertheless, that he took part and was wounded in both the battles of Bunker Hill and Long Island, and afterwards served in Holland and Flanders, and became a Lieutenant General in the British army. *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. II, 407.

to the limits of Charlestown. Though restrained by their paroles from doing anything injurious to the interest of his Britannic Majesty, the silent example of these men who were revered by their fellow-citizens, exerted a powerful influence in restraining many from exchanging their paroles for the protection and privileges of British subjects, and encouraged the spirit of resistance which was now finding its way through the swamps, even to the confines of the capital held by the conquerors. To put an end to this source of trouble, Lord Cornwallis determined to send a number of the principal of these into exile. He issued his orders accordingly, and early on Sunday morning, the 27th day of August, thirty-three of these prisoners on parole were suddenly seized in their houses by armed soldiers under the direction of Major Benson and Captain McMahon.¹ These were Christopher Gadsden, the Lieutenant

¹ This was the famous and infamous Sir John McMahon, the pander and pimp of his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales (George IV). He was the natural son of a butler in the family of Lord Leitrim, his mother being a chambermaid in the same family. From the position of kitchen boy, he made his way to the position of exciseman; became a petty clerk in the treasury; dismissed with disgrace, he joined a company of strolling players; then became a servant of Mr. William English, a noted character of the time, in whose service he first developed his genius for intrigue, assisting in the designs of his master upon the wives and daughters of his neighbors; chastised by his master, he left his service, and volunteered in a regiment then on the eve of departing for America. In that regiment he attracted the attention of Lord Rawdon, an officer in it, who soon discovered his tact in intrigue, and for services rendered his lordship was rewarded with an ensigncy. From the emoluments of deputy commissary he was enabled to purchase a company, and was now Captain John McMahon. His subsequent career is notorious. Introduced to the Prince of Wales by Lord Rawdon, then the Earl of Moira, he so ingratiated himself with his Royal Highness by disgraceful services that he became Keeper of the Privy Purse, the companion and confidant of the heir to the throne. *Memoirs of George the Fourth*, by Robert Huish (London, 1830), 404-407, 568.

Governor, Thomas Farr, late Speaker, Thomas Ferguson, Anthony Toomer, Alexander Moultrie, Jacob Read, Richard Hutson, Edward Blake, Edward Rutledge, Isaac Holmes, Richard Lushington, Peter Timothy, John Edwards, Hugh Rutledge, Thomas Savage, John Floyd, William Price, Thomas Heyward, Jr., William Hasell Gibbes, Edward McCrady, David Ramsay, John Todd, George Flagg, Peter Fayssoux, Josiah Smith, Jr., John Parker, John Sansum, John Ernest Poyas, John Budd, John Loveday, Thomas Singleton, Edward North, and Joseph Atkinson.¹ These citizens were at first taken by armed soldiers to the upper part of the Exchange² and there detained under guard for some hours, when they were conveyed to the armed ship *Sandwich* under command of Captain William Bett moored near Fort Johnson, who appeared to be unapprised of their coming, but who received them courteously, and went himself to the town and obtained leave of Lieutenant Colonel Balfour, the commandant, to allow the friends of the prisoners to furnish them with bedding and to visit them. Not in the least conscious of having broken their paroles or in any manner given occasion for such treatment, upon consultation it was determined to prepare a memorial inquiring the cause of their arrest. This was done, and the next day it was sent to Colonel Balfour through the hands of Captain Bett.

This memorial stated that the subscribers were citizens of Charlestown, that by the articles of capitulation agreed

¹ This list is that given by Tarleton (*Campaigns*, 185). It contains the names of four persons found in no other list, and who are not mentioned by Josiah Smith in his Diary. These are Thomas Farr, John Floyd, William Price, and Joseph Atkinson. These were probably included in the order, but for some cause were either not arrested or were immediately released.

² The Old Postoffice at the foot of Broad Street. The Exchange in the lower story of which the first Provincial Conventions were held.

to by Sir Henry Clinton, citizens were to be considered as prisoners of war on parole, and to be secured in their persons and property whilst they observed their paroles; after the surrender they severally gave their paroles, acknowledging themselves to be prisoners of war upon parole to his Excellency Sir Henry Clinton, and thereby engaged, until exchanged or otherwise released therefrom, to remain in Charlestown until permitted to go out by the commandant, and that they should not, in the meantime, do or cause to be done anything prejudicial to the success of his Majesty's arms, or have intercourse or hold correspondence with his enemies, and to surrender themselves when required.¹ This parole the memorialists stated they had endeavored strictly to observe, nor were they conscious of the least violation of it — notwithstanding which, on Sunday, the 27th instant, early in the morning, the memorialists were suddenly arrested and carried to instant confinement in the Exchange, from which, two or three

¹ The following is the form of paroles given (Johnson's *Traditions*, 267): —

"I do hereby acknowledge myself to be a prisoner of war, upon my parole, to his Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, and that I am thereby engaged, until I shall be exchanged, or otherwise released therefrom, to remain in the town of Charlestown, unless when permitted to go out by the commandant; and that I shall not in the meantime do, or cause anything to be done, prejudicial to the success of his majesty's arms, or have intercourse or hold correspondence with his enemies; and that upon a summons from his Excellency, or other person having authority thereto, that I will surrender myself to him or them at such time and place, as I shall hereafter be required.

"Witness my hand this 21st day of May, 1780.

"W^m JOHNSON.

"I do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the parole this day signed by

"MAJ. STEWART,

"Com'y of Pris^{rs}."

"Witness. JOHN MASSEY."

hours afterwards, they were put into boats and carried on board the *Sandwich* guardship.

The memorialists went on to say that they could not conjecture the reasons of such extraordinary severity, nor by what means they had forfeited the privileges expressly secured to them by the articles of capitulation; they requested that a full and speedy inquiry might be made, and desired to know what was the nature of their offence, and who was their accuser.¹

This memorial Captain Bett took to the town to lay before Colonel Balfour, the commandant; but while he was gone Major Benson came on board the *Sandwich*, and presented to Mr. Gadsden, without date or signature, a paper which was as follows:—

“GENTLEMEN: In obedience to the order of the commandant I am to inform you that my Lord Cornwallis, being highly incensed at the late perfidious revolt of many of the inhabitants of this province, and being well informed by papers that have fallen into his hands since the defeat of the rebel army of the means that have been taken by several people on parole in Charlestown to promote and ferment their spirit of rebellion, his lordship, in order to secure the quiet of the province, finds himself under the necessity to direct the commandant to order several persons to change their place of residence on parole from Charlestown to St. Augustine; his lordship has further directed that a proper vessel shall be provided to carry their baggage with them.”²

The gentlemen prisoners on board the *Sandwich* received no direct reply to their memorial. The British historians, Tarleton and Steadman, represent that the letters found on the officers of General Gates's army implicated these gentlemen as violators of their paroles.³ But it will

¹ Diary of Josiah Smith, Jr., one of the exiles. MSS., Coll. So. Ca. Hist. Soc.

² *Ibid.*

³ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 156; Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 214.

be observed that in this paper presented to them by order of Balfour, and doubtless dictated by him, Lord Cornwallis makes no such specific charge. His statement—for it is not a charge—is that he has ascertained that several people on parole in Charlestown were promoting and fermenting a spirit of rebellion, and that he has, therefore, found it necessary to change the place of the residence of these particular gentlemen to St. Augustine. Not only is there no such specific charge, but his conduct and the character of the measures taken by him, however harsh and inconvenient, preclude the idea that he had obtained any information upon which to base such an accusation. He who had just ordered that all the inhabitants of the province who had subscribed paroles and had taken part in the revolt be punished with the greatest vigor and in the most positive manner, enjoined that every one who had borne arms with the British and afterwards joined the Rebels should be hanged, and had allowed several citizens to be hanged without trial or ceremony in his presence at Camden, would not have hesitated to hang Gadsden and the rest of those he was now sending into exile, if he had had the least tangible evidence that they had violated their paroles. Indeed, Lord Cornwallis appears to have been desirous of disclaiming, in advance, such an imputation, for on the evening of the same day Captain McMahon came on board the *Sandwich* and delivered in the hearing of the prisoners a verbal message: “That Lord Cornwallis considered the persons sent on board this ship to be their prisoners on parole; but for reasons of policy thinks it necessary the place of their residence shall be changed from Charlestown to St. Augustine. Those who think this proceeding an infringement of the capitulation are to be considered as prisoners on board, and as such to be delivered at St. Augustine; those who dissent



therefrom are to set down their names." It is clear from this indirect reply to their memorial that the exile of these citizens was a matter of policy, and not a sentence of punishment; and that his lordship, so far from charging a violation of their parole on the part of these particular citizens, was endeavoring to maintain the position that he himself was conforming to its terms.

Not only did Christopher Gadsden and the others thus taken regard their arrest as a breach of the terms of their capitulation, but General Moultrie, himself a prisoner at the time, and subject to the resentment of the British authorities, did not hesitate to protest against their action. On the 1st of September he wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Balfour as follows: —

"SIR: On perusing the paper of the 29th of August of Robertson, McDonald, and Cammeron published by authority, to my astonishment I find a paragraph to this effect: 'The following is a correct list of the prisoners sent on board the *Sandwich* yesterday morning,' and underneath the names of the most respectable gentlemen inhabitants of this State, most of whose characters I am so well acquainted with that I cannot believe they would have been guilty of any breach of their parole or any article of the capitulation, or done anything to justify so vigorous a proceeding against them. I therefore think it my duty as the senior Continental officer prisoner under the capitulation to demand a release of those gentlemen particularly such as are entitled to the benefit of that act. This harsh proceeding demands my particular attention, and I do, therefore, in behalf of the United States of America, require that they be admitted immediately to return to their paroles; as their being hurried on board a prison ship and I fear without being heard is a violation of the ninth article of the capitulation. If this demand cannot be complied with, I am to request that I may have leave to send an officer to Congress to present this grievance, that they may interpose in behalf of these gentlemen in the manner they shall think proper.

"I am, etc.,

"WM. MOULTRIE."

To this letter Colonel Balfour curtly replied through Major Benson that the commandant would not return any answer to a letter written in such exceptionable and unwarrantable terms as that to him from General Moultrie dated the 1st instant; nor will he receive any further application from him upon the subject.¹ The position Lord Cornwallis assumed was that he had the right for reasons of policy to change the place of residence of any citizen on parole. This the exiles and General Moultrie denied; and American writers have since agreed with them and maintained that this act of his lordship was a violation on his part of the terms of surrender. A candid examination of the parole itself in connection with the articles of capitulation will, however, scarcely sustain this position. Lincoln, under the pressure of Gadsden, had long stood out for the stipulation that upon the surrender citizens and all other persons then in town who were inhabitants of the State should be secured in their persons and properties, and not be considered prisoners of war. But this condition Sir Henry Clinton had at first refused; and had at last only consented to the stipulation that "all civil officers and citizens who have borne arms during the siege must be prisoners on parole, and with respect to their property shall have the same terms as are granted to the militia; and all other persons now in town not described in this or other articles are, notwithstanding, understood to be prisoners on parole." Lincoln had proposed that the militia should be permitted to return to their respective homes and be secured *in their persons and property*, but this Sir Henry Clinton had refused, and had only agreed that "the militia should be permitted to return to their respective homes as prisoners of war on parole, which parole as long as they observe shall secure them from being

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 138, 139.

molested *in their property* by the British troops."¹ Sir Henry thus refused to stipulate that even the militia should be secured in their persons. He had been asked to do so and had declined. He had agreed that as long as they observed their paroles they should not be molested *in their property*, but over their persons he had refused to forego control. To civil officers and citizens who had borne arms he extended the same terms, to all others in the town he granted only the privileges of a parole. An examination also of the form of the certificate signed by these gentlemen will show that this control of their persons was expressly retained. The certificate thus concluded "that upon a summons from his Excellency (Sir Henry Clinton), or other person having authority thereto, that I will surrender myself to him at such time and place as I shall hereafter be required." This clause expressly provided for the surrender of the person giving the parole at any time and place where required. However unwise and unjust this action of Lord Cornwallis, his right to take it in the exercise of his own discretion as a conqueror without violating the terms upon which he had obtained the surrender of the town, cannot be justly denied.

The announcement that all persons who regarded their arrest and exile as an infringement of the capitulation were to be regarded as close prisoners on the ship, and as such were to be delivered at St. Augustine, occasioned some consternation among the company; and before they could come to any determination in regard to it, Captain McMahon withdrew to his boat and went to town without an answer.

On Wednesday, the 30th of August, ten other citizens, to wit: Rev. John Lewis, John Neufville, William Johnson, Thomas Grimball, Robert Cochran, Thomas Hall,

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 100-102.

William Hall, William Livingston, John Mouat, and James Hamden Thomson, were also seized. These were taken to the transport ship *Fidelity*. Dr. Fayssoux, as belonging to the Continental Hospital, and Mr. Thomas Savage, on account of his health, were permitted to return to their homes again.

The parties on the two ships daily received supplies from their friends in town, who were also allowed to visit them. The exiles and their friends were treated with great courtesy by Captain Bett and his officers, Captain Bett entertaining his prisoners in the evening at his own table in turn as room was made. On Sunday, the 3d of September, the ships were crowded with the families and friends of the prisoners, bidding them farewell, as they were to sail the next day; and in the evening the twenty-nine first arrested were transferred from Captain Bett's hospitable charge to the transport ship *Fidelity*, where they found the ten others added to their company. Mr. Alexander Moultrie was permitted to take passage with his family in a schooner which accompanied the transport. The exiles were allowed to take with them servants, and these added twenty-six to the number of passengers; so that with the crew and soldiers sent to defend the ship, should it be attacked, the whole numbered 106 souls. The transport was not large enough to accommodate so many, and the exiles were much crowded and annoyed also by their proximity to the live-stock taken on board for their support at St. Augustine. But these inconveniences were insignificant in view of the calamity of their separation from their families, and forced abandonment of them to the mercies of an irritated and cruel foe.

On Monday, the 4th of September, Captain Abbot with another officer came on board the *Fidelity*, and calling the



prisoners together presented for their consideration the following written proposition:—

“Will the gentlemen bound for St. Augustine accept of their paroles? I consider the word parole to mean that the gentlemen while on board and at St. Augustine are not to do anything whatever prejudicial to his Majesty’s service. If the gentlemen are not retaken, it is not expected that they are to return to any part of America under the British government, but are to consider themselves on parole.”

This was banishment indeed; but all the gentlemen, except Christopher Gadsden, accepted the terms and agreed to give their paroles. The ship’s deck was cleared, and in the evening she dropped down near to Sullivan’s Island with her freight of imprisoned patriots, sailed the next day, and reached St. Augustine on the 8th of September. The day after their arrival, the exiles were landed and paraded before the Governor, Patrick Tonnyn, and the commandant of the post, Lieutenant Colonel Glazier, when, all on both sides being uncovered, the commandant asked if they had considered the parole required of them; all but Gadsden expressed a readiness to comply with it, but suggested some minor alteration in the paper proposed. These were not allowed, and the paroles as dictated were signed by all but Gadsden. He indignantly refused, and with the heroism of his character dauntlessly exclaimed: “With men who have once deceived me, I can enter into no new contract. Had the British commanders regarded the terms of the capitulation of Charlestown, I might now, although a prisoner under my own roof, have enjoyed the smiles and consolations of my surrounding family, but even without a shadow of accusation proffered against me for any act inconsistent with my plighted faith I am torn from them, and here in a distant land invited to enter into new engagements. I will give no parole.” “Think better of it,

sir," said the officer; "a second refusal of it will fix your destiny—a dungeon will be your future habitation." "Prepare it, then," said the inflexible patriot; "I will give no parole, *so help me God!*" Upon this refusal he was immediately conducted to the Castle at St. Augustine, where he was thrown into a dungeon in which he was confined for forty-two weeks,¹ until exchanged with the rest of the exiles in July, 1781. While the other gentlemen were subject to many petty annoyances and small tyrannies from different officers, they were, upon the whole, fairly well treated during their exile. They were allowed to hire houses and form messes into which they divided their company, and to receive remittances and supplies from home. And as they were all, with few exceptions, men of some fortune, they lived there without any great suffering and with perhaps as little inconvenience as possible for men restrained of their liberty and deprived of the comforts and society of their homes. Their greatest deprivation no doubt was in the denial of free correspondence with their families and friends. The communications between them were frequent, but subject to the supervision of the British authorities. Mr. Jacob Read was arrested and confined in a cell next to that of Christopher Gadsden, because of imprudent expressions in some of his letters to his friends which fell under the eyes of his keepers.²

In furtherance of his purpose indicated in his letter from Camden to the commandants of districts, that compensation should be made out of their estates to the persons claiming to have been injured by the Whigs, Lord Cornwallis on the 6th of September issued a proclamation reciting that, notwithstanding the moderation of the British

¹ Josiah Smith's Diary; Garden's *Anecdotes*, 169; *Memoir of Gadsden*, Coll. So. Ca. Hist. Soc., vol. IV.

² Josiah Smith's Diary.

government and his Majesty's unparalleled clemency to his deluded subjects, who, from a sense of their errors, had returned to their duty and allegiance, there were several persons of property in the province who obstinately persisted in their guilty and treasonable practices, and were either in the service or acting under the authority of the rebel Congress, or by abandoning their plantations to join the enemies of Great Britain, or by an open avowal of rebellious principles, manifested a wicked and desperate perseverance in opposing to the utmost of their power the reestablishment of his Majesty's just and lawful authority; and as it was of dangerous consequence to suffer such persons to possess and make use of their estates in the province, thereby furnishing them with the means of carrying their malicious and traitorous designs more effectually into execution, and as it was likewise just and expedient that the property which such persons had voluntarily staked in support of rebellion should now be applied to defray a portion of the expenses occasioned by their actions, ordered that all the estates, both real and personal, in the province, belonging to such persons be sequestered, and appointed John Cruden to be commissioner to execute the purposes of the proclamation, and to seize and take possession of the estates of all such persons. From motives of humanity and compassion, the proclamation declared, his lordship authorized the commissioner to pay for the support and maintenance of families consisting of a wife and children, one-fourth part of the net annual product of the sequestered estates, and one-sixth part in case of a wife without children.¹

This measure, with the others mentioned prohibiting the pursuit of any industries except by those under renewed allegiance to the Crown, was much more effective than

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 180.

the exile of the leaders of the Revolution, as appears in a notice published in the *Royal South-Carolina Gazette*¹ on the 21st of September. This notice recites that several memorials and petitions had been presented to the commandant of Charlestown by sundry persons, setting forth that they were desirous to show every mark of allegiance and attachment in their power to his Majesty's person and government, to which they were most well affected, and prayed that they might have an opportunity to evince the sincerity of their professions; that these memorials and petitions had been referred to gentlemen of known loyalty and integrity, as well as knowledge of the persons and character of the inhabitants for their report of the manner in which the memorialists had previously conducted themselves; and upon their report the persons whose names were published would receive certificates which would entitle them to use the free exercise of their trades or professions and the privileges enjoyed by other loyal inhabitants of Charlestown. The names of 163 citizens were appended to this notice. Most of these were tradesmen and mechanics, whom stern necessity compelled to submit to the terms upon which only they would be allowed to labor for the maintenance of their families. Some of them were merchants of whom Ramsay speaks, and a considerable number were foreigners. A few were of families of influence, who had probably given in to save their estates, and some of these, no doubt, could truthfully assert that they had had no intention of abandoning their allegiance to the King in their struggle for liberty. The list of these names was headed by the British officials with that of Daniel Huger, who was one of the Council who had gone out of the town during the siege with Governor Rutledge

¹ *The Royal South-Carolina Gazette*, printed by Robertson, Macdonald & Cameron, by authority of the Royal army.

to maintain the organization of the government in other parts of the State. He with his colleague, Colonel Charles Pinckney, appears to have given up the cause as lost, and both took protection. The names of Benjamin Dart, John Dart, John Waring, Elias Horry, Gabriel Manigault, Jr., Francis Huger, Thomas Brandford Smith, William Roper, Thomas Roper, Charles Freer, William Stanyarne, John Raven Stanyarne, Thomas Gibbes, Elisha Bonneau, Wade Hampton, Benjamin Darrell, Jacob Bonnell, Edward Hannahan, Joseph Dill, Thomas Radcliffe, Jr., Elisha Poinsett, Nicholas Venning, and Charles Lowndes are also found in this list. One, at least, of these, Wade Hampton, was yet to have a distinguished part in the struggle on behalf of the cause of his countrymen.

There were others in the town and country who could be swerved from the cause they had espoused by no threats or inducements. John Cruden had been appointed Commissioner of Sequestered Estates under the proclamation of Cornwallis, and on the 30th of December he published in the *Royal Gazette* a notice that in consequence of the powers in him vested by his lordship, he makes public to all whom it may concern that he had given the necessary orders for the seizure of the estates, both real and personal (excepting such property in Charlestown as was secured to those who were in town at the time of this capitulation), of the Rev. Robert Smith, John Mathews, William Gibbes, Thomas Savage, John Edwards, Thomas Shubrick, Arnoldus Vanderhorst, Richard Hutson, William Parker, Alexander Gillon, Henry Huse, Richard Withers, Stephen Drayton, Joseph Legaré, James Neilson, Benjamin Cattell, William Sanders, Joseph Slann, Hawkins Martin, Samuel Sligh, Isaac Ford, Charles Middleton,¹ Francis Goodwin,

¹ This was probably Charles S. Myddleton of St. Matthew's, Orangeburgh, afterwards Colonel in Sumter's brigade State troops. No other Charles Middleton appears at this time.

Thomas Ziegler, and John Sanders. He strictly prohibits any one attempting to conceal or remove such property, and forbids the payment of debts due to these persons, requiring every one indebted to them to furnish him with an account of such indebtedness. And the more effectually to prevent any collusive practices, Cruden went on to promise "to all those who may make discoveries of the concealment of negroes, horses, cattle, plate, household furniture, books, bonds, deeds, etc., so that the property may be secured and the delinquents punished, a generous reward."¹

Notwithstanding these discouragements, observes Ramsay, the genius of America rose superior to them all. At no time did her sons appear to greater advantage than when they were depressed by successive misfortunes. They seemed to gain strength from their losses, and, instead of giving way to the pressure of calamities, to oppose them with more determined resolution. From the day of the disaster of the army under Gates, notwithstanding Cornwallis's repressive and cruel measures, the ruthless hanging of citizens without even the form of trial at Camden, the exile of others from Charlestown, the prohibition of honest labor, and the confiscation of estates, the prospects of liberty in South Carolina brightened. Elated with victory, the conquerors grew more insolent and rapacious, while the real friends of independence became resolute and determined. There can be little doubt that upon the whole Cornwallis's civil administration lost more of the friends of his Majesty's government than his victories had subdued of his enemies.

¹ See also Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 171.



CHAPTER XXXIII

1780

THERE was now no organized body of armed Whigs in South Carolina ; but just across the North Carolina line Sumter was gathering his dispersed troopers around Davie's faithful little band. Shelby and Clarke and Williams were planning another and more formidable expedition against Ferguson, and Marion was watching an opportunity to return. Disaster had not conquered the spirit of these heroic men. They had seen the Continental army, from which they had hoped so much and the way for which they had so well prepared, defeated and routed, totally disappear from the field. But they had learned by experience and necessity their own ability to cope with the British troops, regular, Provincial, or Tory, and casting aside all reliance upon aid from Congress they prepared to open the second campaign of the memorable year of 1780.

Reaching the mountains in safety, the victors of Musgrove's Mills had formed a junction with McDowell's party from Smith's Ford. So far from giving up the struggle upon Gates's defeat, Shelby at once proposed that a body of volunteers be raised on both sides of the mountains in sufficient numbers to cope with Ferguson. All heartily united in the propriety and feasibility of the undertaking. It was agreed that the Musgrove prisoners should be sent to a place of security, that the over-mountain men should return home to recruit and strengthen their numbers ; while Colonel McDowell should send an express

to Colonels Cleveland and Herndon and Major Winston of North Carolina, urging them to raise volunteers and join the enterprise. McDowell was to remain to preserve the beef and stock of the Whigs in the Upper Catawba valleys and caves, to obtain information and keep the overmountain men constantly apprised of the enemy's movements. The Musgrove prisoners were left in charge of Colonel Clarke. Clarke, after continuing some distance with the prisoners, resolved to return to Georgia by the mountain trails upon an expedition of his own. He therefore turned over the prisoners to Colonel Williams, who, with Captain Hammond, conducted them safely to Hillsboro, where, meeting Governor Rutledge and claiming the glory of the whole achievement, he obtained promotion which was afterwards the cause of much trouble.¹

Cornwallis's order issued after the battle of Camden had been received by Lieutenant Colonel Browne, now commanding in Augusta, where he had himself been tarred and feathered and cruelly treated by the Revolutionists in Georgia in the commencement of the trouble, which was a cover to him for the most sanguinary revenge.² The morning after its reception five victims were taken from the jail by his order and gibbeted without trial. Encouraged by the hope that this order of the British commander-in-chief and Browne's cruel and vindictive enforcement

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 118, 119.

² McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 319. This is the Whig or American account, but it is just to say that Colonel Browne indignantly denied the accusation of cruelty, and in a very able letter to Dr. Ramsay, found among the latter's papers upon his death (to which we will have occasion again to refer), he makes a very strong defence of himself against them generally. He does not, however, in this letter refer to this particular incident. It should also be observed that the men executed at this time were charged with having borne arms in the British service and afterwards joined the Americans, and that in similar cases the Americans applied the same penalty.



of it would rouse the resentment and bring into the field all who felt an interest in the American cause, Colonel Clarke determined upon making an attempt to recover a part of his own State. This was the cause of his sudden abandonment of the prisoners to Williams. In this effort he was joined by Lieutenant Colonel James McCall of South Carolina,¹ who proceeded to the western part of the Ninety-Six District, hoping to raise a joint force on the borders of the two States of at least one thousand men. With this force it was supposed that Augusta would submit with little or no resistance, as Cornwallis had reduced its garrison when preparing to meet Gates, and that thereupon the post at Ninety-Six would probably be evacuated. It was a bold and masterly scheme, and could the thousand men have been found it would probably have succeeded and produced most decisive results. But unfortunately the Ninety-Six region was as strongly Tory as that of Fair Forest, and the few Whigs who had surrendered with Williamson and Pickens had not yet felt the effects of Cornwallis's proclamation, and attributed the sacrifice of life of which they heard to other causes. McCall made his first application to Colonel Pickens and the most influential officers of his former regiment, but with little success. The stipulations in their paroles had not yet been violated, and they considered themselves bound by conscience and honor not to break their engagements until an infringement was made upon its conditions. Instead of five hundred men which had been confidently calculated upon from Ninety-Six, McCall's persuasion could only induce eighty to accompany him. With this number he marched to Soap Creek in Georgia, forty miles northwest of Augusta, which had been fixed on as the place of ren-

¹ James McCall had been, it will be recollected, a Captain under Major Williamson at Ninety-Six in 1776, and had been captured by the Indians.

devious. Colonel Clarke had been more successful, his numbers amounting to three hundred and fifty. Though this little band fell far short of his expectations, and were really inadequate to the purposes Clarke had in view, it was then too late to relinquish a project which he so anxiously wished to accomplish; he was therefore compelled to depend upon courage and stratagem as substitutes for numbers in his ranks.

Colonel Clarke's arrangements had been made so suddenly and so unexpectedly to the enemy that he reached the vicinity of Augusta unobserved, and found them unprepared for an attack. On the morning of the 14th of September he halted near the town and formed his command into three divisions: the right commanded by Lieutenant Colonel McCall, the left by Major Samuel Taylor, and the centre by himself in person. The centre approached the town by the middle road, and the right and left by the lower and upper roads at its eastern and western extremities. Near Hawk's Creek in the west Major Taylor fell in with an Indian camp, and with a desultory fire the Indians retreated toward their allies. Taylor pressed on to get possession of McKay's trading-house, called the White House, a mile and a half west of the town. At this house the Indians joined a company of the King's Rangers, commanded by Captain Johnston. The attack upon this, the camp, gave the first intimation to Browne of the Americans' approach. He reënforced Johnston, and advanced to the scene of action in person with the main body of his garrison. The centre and right division completely surprised the garrison and forts, and took possession without resistance; seventy prisoners and all the Indians present were put under charge of a guard, and Clarke marched with the residue to the assistance of Taylor. Browne had joined Johnston and the Indians, and upon



Clarke's approach took shelter in the White House and defended it. Several attempts were made to dislodge the British, but failed. A desultory fire continued from eleven o'clock until night, but it was found that the enemy could not be dislodged without artillery. The house was situated about eighty yards from the river. The Indians who had not room to fight from the house took shelter under the banks, which furnished them with a good breastwork, while they were secured by the thick wood between the bank and the water's edge. At the close of the day the firing ceased, and strong guards were posted to keep the enemy in check.

Under cover of the night, Browne added strength to his position by throwing up some works round the house. The crevices between the weather boards and ceiling were filled up with earth to make the walls proof against musketry; loopholes were cut out at convenient distances; the windows were closed up with boards taken from the floors, and defence rendered as formidable as the materials at command would admit. The next morning two pieces of artillery were brought by the Americans from the British works and placed in a position to bear upon the house; but the carriages not being designed for field service, and the handling unskilful, they proved of little service. Captain Martin of South Carolina, the only artillerist attached to Clarke's command, was unfortunately killed soon after the pieces were brought to bear on the enemy. A fire was continued through the day with small arms, but without much prospect of compelling the enemy to abandon the house or surrender.

On the morning of the 15th, before daylight, the Americans drove the Indians from the river bank, and cut off their supply of water, by which the wounded, particularly, suffered greatly. The dead men and horses

which lay about the house became very offensive. Early in the engagement Browne was shot through both thighs, and suffered among the wounded, who were often heard calling for water and medical aid. On the night of the 15th the garrison was reënforced by fifty Cherokee Indians, who crossed the river in canoes. The sufferings of the wounded, the want of water, and the nauseous smell of animal putrefaction, it was supposed, would discourage the besieged and induce them to surrender, but Browne was not a man to yield. On the 17th Clarke sent a summons to him, but the proposition was rejected and Clarke warned of the destruction his measures would bring upon the people of Georgia. In the afternoon the summons to surrender was repeated with the addition that Browne would be held responsible for the consequences of his temerity; Browne replied that it was his determination to defend himself to the last extremity.

Immediately after Colonel Clarke's appearance, Browne had dispatched messengers by different routes to Ninety-Six, informing Colonel Cruger of his situation and the necessity of immediate relief by reënforcements. Sir Patrick Houston, one of the messengers, reached Ninety-Six early on the next day, and was the first to communicate Browne's critical situation to Cruger, who lost no time in making preparations and advancing to his relief. On the night of the 17th Clarke's scouts informed him of Cruger's approach by forced marches, with five hundred British regulars and Royal militia to the relief of the besieged. In the meanwhile many of his men, availing themselves of being in the neighborhood, had gone to visit families or friends from whom they had long been absent; others, who had been actuated by the hope of obtaining plunder rather than by motives of zeal in the cause of their country, had decamped, laden with goods



which Colonel Browne had received not long before for presents to the Indians.

About eight o'clock on the morning of the 18th, the British troops appeared on the opposite side of the river. The weakness occasioned by the loss of men in the siege, and by the desertion of those who preferred plunder to the honor and interest of their country, compelled the Americans to raise the siege and retreat, having sustained a loss of about sixty killed and wounded; among the former were Captains Charles Jourdine and William Martin. William Luckie, a brave and much respected young man from Carolina, was killed early in the contest in a desperate effort to gain the possession of the White House. Such of the Whigs as were badly wounded and not in a condition to be removed were left in the town. Captain Ashby, an officer noted for his bravery and humanity, with twenty-eight others, including the wounded, fell into the hands of the enemy. Ashby and twelve others of the wounded prisoners were hanged on the staircase of the White House, where Browne was lying wounded, so, it was said, that he might have the satisfaction of seeing the victims of his vengeance expire. Their bodies were delivered up to the Indians, who scalped and otherwise mangled them, and threw them into the river. Henry Duke, John Burgamy, Scott Reeden, Jordan Ricketson, — Darling, and two youths, brothers, of seventeen and fifteen years of age, named Glass, were all hanged. The elder of these youths was shot through the thigh, and could not be carried away when the retreat was ordered, and the younger brother could not be prevailed upon to leave him; his tenderness and affection cost him his life. A horse was the scaffold on which they were mounted, and from which they were gibbeted. But all this was merciful when compared with the fate which awaited the other prisoners;

these were delivered to the Indians, to glut their vengeance for the loss they had sustained. The Indians formed a circle and placed the prisoners in the centre. Their eagerness to shed blood spared the victims from tedious torture. Some were scalped before they sank under the Indian weapons of war; others were thrown into the fires and roasted to death. The record of these transactions, from the pens of British officers who were present and exultingly communicated it to their friends in Savannah, Charlestown, and London, where it stands upon record in the papers of the day, says McCall, from whom this account is taken, was before him when he wrote.¹ Cornwallis himself wrote to Ferguson on the 23d that he "had the *satisfaction to hear* from Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, that he had arrived in time to save Browne, and retaken the guns, and totally routed the enemy, who had retired with great precipitation; *that the Indians had pursued and scalped many of them.*"²

The British loss was announced, it is said, in Colonel Browne's official letter published in Charlestown, but cannot now be stated with correctness.³ The morning on which Colonel Clarke retreated, he paroled the British officers and soldiers who had been captured, and received certificates from the officers of the number of men who were to be considered and accounted for as prisoners of war; to wit, 2 officers and 41 men of the King's Rangers, 1 officer and 11 men of DeLancey's corps, and a surgeon. These officers and private soldiers, regardless of their obligations as prisoners on parole, resumed their arms immediately after Clarke retreated. If Browne had

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 322-327.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 192.

³ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 328. The official letter mentioned cannot now be found in the files of Charlestown papers of that date.

not been surprised, says McCall, the numbers in his ranks would have authorized the defeat of his adversaries. These numbers he puts at 550 before Cruger's arrival. Tarleton, however, gives Browne's original strength at but 350; to wit, 150 Provincials and 200 Cherokee Indians. To these were added 50 more Indians, who joined him on the 15th.¹ Clarke commenced the siege with but 430, and was afterward far outnumbered, first by the desertion of some of his own men, and then by Cruger's reënforcement of Browne.

After the siege was raised, the country was searched by the British, and those whose relations were engaged in the American cause were arrested and crowded into prisons; others who were suspected of having intercourse with any of Clarke's command were hanged without the forms of trial. Old men with hoary heads bending toward the grave were crowded into filthy places of confinement for no other crimes than those of receiving visits from their sons and grandsons after a long absence. These aged men were kept in close confinement as hostages for the neutrality of the country; but by the inclemency of the season, the smallpox, and inhuman treatment, very few of them survived to greet their friends when liberty was secured. One of them, the father of Captains Samuel and John Alexander, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, was ignominiously chained to a cart and dragged forty-two miles in two days, and when he attempted to rest his feeble frame by leaning upon the cart, the driver was ordered to scourge him with his whip.²

Clarke's men had dispersed immediately after the siege, to look after and take leave of their families, and a time and place were appointed for their rendezvous. About the last of September they met at the place appointed. Clarke

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 162, 163.

² McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 329, 330.

found himself at the head of three hundred men, but they were encumbered by a train of four hundred women and children. In the devastation of the country for two years, vestiges of cultivation were scarcely anywhere now to be seen, and to leave their families behind under such circumstances was to abandon them to starvation and the barbarity of the enemy, which has just been described. With this helpless multitude Colonel Clarke commenced a march of near two hundred miles through a mountainous wilderness, to avoid being cut off by the enemy, who were now on the march to intercept them. On the eleventh day they reached the Watauga and Nolachucky rivers, on the confines of the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, in a starved and otherwise deplorable condition. They were received, however, with the greatest hospitality and kindness by the inhabitants of this region. Supplies of clothing, substance, and shelter were in no instance withheld from them, nor were these gratuities momentary; they ceased only with the demands upon their bounty which the occasion called for.¹ Colonel Cruger had started in pursuit of Clarke, and had called upon Ferguson at Fair Forest to coöperate with him; but as Cruger soon found that Clarke's course would carry him too far from Ninety-Six, he gave up the pursuit. Fortunately for the Whigs, as it afterwards happened, Ferguson adhered to the plan and moved in the direction of Gilbert Town,² where he was informed McDowell, Clarke, and Shelby would rally their men.

While these partisans were gathering their clans, their compatriots immediately in the front of Cornwallis's army were not idle. Davie was again the first to take the field. He had now been appointed by Governor Nash of North Carolina Colonel Commandant of cavalry, with instructions

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 332, 334.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 164.

to raise a regiment. He had succeeded in raising only a part, but with his eighty dragoons and two small companies of riflemen commanded by Major George Davidson he crossed into South Carolina and took post at Providence, about thirty-five miles from Charlotte. Here, amid the scenes of his boyhood and among his old friends, and joined by staunch volunteers from the Low Country, he undertook again the business of watching the movements of the enemy, and interrupting their foraging parties and convoys.¹

After the defeat of Gates, Lord Cornwallis withdrew his forces to Camden and rested and refreshed his men while waiting for reënforcements from Charlestown. On the 8th of September,² his reënforcements, the Seventh Regiment and some recruits for the Provincial regiments, having arrived, with the principal column of his army,—the Seventh, Twenty-third, Thirty-third, and Seventy-first regiments of infantry, the volunteers of Ireland, Hamilton's corps, Bryan's refugees, four pieces of cannon, about fifty wagons, and a detachment of cavalry,—he marched by Hanging Rock toward the Waxhaw settlement; whilst Tarleton crossed the Catawba and moved up the west side of the river with the body of the British dragoons,³ the light and legionary infantry and a three-pounder, Lord Cornwallis went into camp in the Waxhaws about forty miles from Charlotte.

Davie with his small force, now the only regularly armed

¹ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 195; Lee's *Memoirs of the War of 1776*, 193; Ramsay's *Revolution of No. Ca.*, vol. II, 186.

² Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, *supra*.

³ Tarleton states (*Campaigns*, 158) that he "crossed the Wateree and moved up the east side of the river." The British army was already on the east side, so that if he crossed he must have moved up the west, not the east, side. McKenzie in his *Strictures* points this out (*Strictures*, 45), and Hanger in his reply to McKenzie states that the word "east" was a misprint.

body of resistance in the whole Southern province, did not hesitate to confront and annoy the advance of the enemy. The prosperous settlement in the Waxhaws had in the last three months been so exhausted by the armies traversing it that the British general was straitened for provisions and obliged to send his light parties in every direction for the safety of which he had no apprehensions. Colonel Davie, knowing his lordship's necessities, and the measure he must take to supply them, watched his opportunity to avail himself of the exposure of any of his lordship's parties. An occasion soon presented itself. Ascertaining that whilst the main body of the enemy was encamped on the north bank of the Catawba, which here changes its course from north and south to nearly east and west, some of the light troops and the Loyalists occupied the southern bank of the river at some distance from the main force of the British, he determined to beat up their quarters in the night. With this purpose he set out on the evening of the 20th of September, and taking an extensive circuit turned to the left of Cornwallis and gained unperceived the camp of the Loyalists. They had changed their ground nearer to the light troops, and now were stationed at the plantation of Captain Wahub, who was a volunteer with him. Davie nevertheless persevered in his enterprise. Being among his friends, he was sure to receive accurate intelligence; and he had with him the best of guides, as many of his corps were inhabitants of this settlement, their property, wives, and children being now in possession of the enemy. Davie came in sight of Wahub's place early the next morning, where he discovered a part of the Loyalists and British Legion mounted and arrayed near the house, which in this quarter was in some degree concealed by a corn-field cultivated quite to the yard. Detaching Major Davidson through the corn-field



with the greater part of the riflemen, with orders to seize the house, he himself gained the lane leading to it. The enemy were completely surprised, and being keenly pushed betook themselves to flight. Twenty killed and 40 wounded were left on the ground, and as little or no resistance was made, only one of Davie's corps was wounded. Having collected 96 horses with their equipments, and 120 stands of arms, Davie retired with expedition, the British drums beating to arms in the contiguous quarters. Captain Wahub, the owner of the farm, spent the few moments in painful if precious converse with his wife and children, who ran out, as soon as the fire ceased, to embrace him. These brief moments were succeeded by others most bitter. For the British troops reaching the house, the commanding officer ordered it burnt. A torch was applied, and Wahub saw the only shelter of his helpless and unprotected family wrapped in flames, without the power of affording any relief to his forlorn wife and children. Davie made good his retreat and returned to his camp at Providence, having marched sixty miles in twenty-four hours.¹ This affair, it will be observed, was a repetition in almost all of the details of the same officer's brilliant action at Hanging Rock on the 1st of August. In that affair Davie had surprised the British and cut to pieces a detachment in the face of the whole British camp, carrying off sixty horses and one hundred muskets. In this he did the same, only causing the enemy greater loss in men, horses, and arms.

On the 22d of September, Earl Cornwallis directed the

¹ It is again remarkable that this affair, like that of Musgrove's Mills, is not mentioned by any British historian, nor by Ramsay, nor by Johnson. This account is taken from *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 195; *Hist. of No. Ca.* (Wheeler), 195; Howe's *Hist. Presbyterian Church*, 537, 538.

British Legion and light infantry to recross the Catawba at Blair's Ford in order to form the advance guard for the immediate possession of Charlotte Town, where Cornwallis proposed to remain until he had consumed the provisions in that settlement, and then to proceed to the friendly settlement at Cross Creek. The movement was, however, delayed a day or two in consequence of the illness of Colonel Tarleton, who was prostrated with fever. The day that Davie had returned to his camp with the spoils he had secured at Wahub's plantation, Generals Sumner and Davidson had arrived there with their brigades of North Carolina militia. But on the advance of the British they retreated by the nearest route to Salisbury, leaving Colonel Davie with about 150 men and some volunteers under Major Joseph Graham to hover about the advancing foe, to annoy his foraging parties, and to keep in touch with his light troops. Obeying these orders on the night of the 25th, Colonel Davie entered Charlotte, the British army having advanced to within a few miles of the town.

The town of Charlotte is situated on rising ground, and consisted then of about forty houses. It had two main streets crossing at right angles, and a court-house in the centre, the lower part of which was used as a market house. The left of the town was an open common, the right was covered with underwood. Davie with his small party determined not to yield the town without a struggle. He dismounted one of his companies and stationed it under the court-house; the other two companies were posted behind the garden fences on either side of the street by which the British approached. The British Legion now under Major Hanger led the advance, the main body following. The Legion was ordered to dislodge Davie's party. As they approached within sixty



yards of the court-house, Davie opened fire upon them, from which they recoiled. Mortified at the hesitancy of the famous corps, Lord Cornwallis rode up in person and addressed them, "Legion! remember you have everything to lose, but nothing to gain," alluding as it is supposed to the former reputation of the corps. Upon this Major Hanger ordered a charge, but, though thus taunted, no inducement of their officers could upon this occasion induce the Legion cavalry to approach Davie's men. They retreated without carrying out Lord Cornwallis's orders. Much dissatisfied, his lordship ordered the light infantry and the infantry of the Legion to advance and dislodge the enemy, which they immediately effected.¹ "The whole of the British army," says Steadman, "was actually kept at bay for some minutes by a few mounted Americans, not exceeding twenty in number."² Colonel Davie then ordered a retreat, and the British pursued. The pursuit lasted for several miles, in which Colonel Locke³ of Rowan was killed and Major Graham severely wounded. About thirty others were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners.⁴ The King's troops did not come out of this skirmish unhurt. Major Hanger and Captains Campbell and McDonald were wounded, and twelve non-commissioned officers and men were killed and wounded.⁵

The British, says Tarleton, found Charlotte a place of blended conveniences and great disadvantages. The mills in its neighborhood were supposed of sufficient conse-

¹ This is the account given by McKenzie (*Strictures*, 47). In his reply Tarleton, p. 55, admits that a part, for "reasons best known to themselves," did not advance. Steadman credits Webster's brigade with the honor of driving Davie's men from behind the court-house. *Hist. of the Am. War*, vol. II (Steadman), 216.

² *Hist. Am. War* (Steadman), *ibid.*

³ Nephew of Colonel Francis Locke, victor of Ramsour's Mills.

⁴ Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 195.

⁵ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 159.

quence to render it for the present an eligible position, and in future a necessary post when the army advanced. But its convenience as an intermediate situation between Camden and Salisbury, and the quantity of its mills, did not counterbalance its defects. It was in the very heart of the most inveterate enemies of the King. The plantations in the neighborhood were small and uncultivated, the roads narrow and crossed in every direction, and the whole face of the country covered with close and thick woods. In addition to these disadvantages no estimation could be made of the sentiments of half the inhabitants of North Carolina whilst the Royal army remained at Charlotte Town. It was evident, as the King's officers had frequently reported, that the colonies of Mecklenburg and Rowan were more hostile to England than any others in America. The vigilance and animosity of these surrounding districts checked the exertions of the well affected, and totally destroyed all communication between the King's troops and the Loyalists in the other parts of the province. No British commander could obtain any information in that position which would facilitate his designs or guide his future conduct. Every report concerning the measures of the Governor and Assembly would be ambiguous; accounts of the preparation of the militia could only be vague and uncertain; and all intelligence of the real force and movement of the Continentals must be totally unattainable. The foraging parties were every day harassed by the inhabitants, who did not remain at home to receive payment for the produce of their plantations, but generally fired from covert places to annoy the British detachments. Ineffectual attempts were made upon convoys coming from Camden and the intermediate post at Blair's Mill; but individuals with expresses were frequently cut off. An attack was directed against a



picket at Polk's Mill, two miles from the town,¹ and a foraging party in large force at a mill seven miles from Charlotte was attacked, a British captain was killed with others and several wounded, the Americans making good their retreat without loss. The detachment returned to town disappointed of the forage, and reported to Lord Cornwallis that "every bush on the road concealed a Rebel."²

Turning now again to the Pee Dee section, Marion, it will be recollected, had on his retreat to North Carolina sent back Major James to obtain intelligence of what should occur. He returned in a few days with the news that the country through which Wemyss had marched along Black River, Lynch's Creek, and Pee Dee for seventy miles in length, and at places for fifteen miles in width, exhibited one continued scene of desolation and suffering. On most of the plantations every house was burnt to the ground, the negroes carried off, the inhabitants plundered, the stock, especially sheep, wantonly killed, and all accessible provisions destroyed.³ Fortunately the corn was not generally housed, and much of that was saved. At the command of this officer the church of Indian Town was burnt, because he regarded all Presbyterian churches as "sedition shops." The Holy Bible, too, with Rous's Psalms, indicated the presence of the hated rebellious sect, and was uniformly consigned to the flames. The house of Major James was burned, and his property swept away and destroyed. Especial attention was paid to the destruction of sheep and loom-houses, because these constituted a principal element in support of the inhabitants both in food and clothing.

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 160.

² Wheeler's *Hist. of No. Ca.*, 263.

³ James's *Life of Marion*, 57; *The So.-Ca. and American General Gazette*, Sept. 20, 1780; *The Royal S.-C. Gazette*, Sept. 21, 1780.

The loom-houses were invariably reduced to ashes, and when the sheep could not be used for food, they were bayoneted or shot, and left to putrefy on the ground. Adam Cusack, a noted Whig, who had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the enemies of his country, but who had neither given parole as a prisoner nor taken protection, was charged with refusing to transport some British officers over a ferry; and also with having shot at them across the river, as one account states it, or as another, with having shot at a black servant of a Tory officer, John Brockington. He was taken prisoner soon after, and for this offence tried by a court-martial, and on the evidence of a negro condemned. His wife and children prostrated themselves before Wemyss, as he was on horseback, pleading for a pardon, but instead he would have ridden over them had not one of his officers prevented the foul deed. From this scene he proceeded to superintend the execution of the unfortunate man. Cusack was carried to a spot on the road leading from Cheraw to Darlington, a spot in recent times occupied by the first depot of the Cheraw and Darlington Railroad, below the village of Society Hill, and was there hanged.¹

The report of these cruelties and atrocities called Marion from his retreat and roused the people, whom James reported were now ready to join him. Marion in a few days returned to South Carolina by a forced march. On the second day of this march, while passing through the Tory settlement on the Little Pee Dee, he traversed sixty miles, and arriving near Lynch's Creek was joined by John James and Henry Mouzon with a considerable force. Here, about the 14th of September, he was informed that a party of Tories, more numerous than his own, lay at

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 58; Gregg's *Hist. of the Old Cheraws*, 302, 303; Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 188, 189.



Black Mingo fifteen miles below, under the command of Captain John Coming Ball. He might soon have been reënforced, but finding his men unanimous for battle, he gratified their wishes. The Tories were posted at Shepherd's Ferry on the south side of Black Mingo, a deep navigable creek, and had command of the passage. To approach them Marion was obliged to cross the creek one mile above, over a boggy causeway and bridge of planks. It was nearly midnight when he arrived at the bridge, and while the party was crossing an alarm gun was heard in the Tory camp. Marion immediately ordered his men to follow him in full gallop, and in a few minutes they reached the main road, which led to the ferry about three hundred yards in front of it. Here they all dismounted except a small body, which kept to their horses. Marion ordered a corps of supernumerary officers, under the command of Captain Thomas Waties, to proceed down the road and attack a house where it was supposed the Tories were posted, and at the same time he detached two companies to the right, under Colonel Hugh Horry, and the cavalry to the left to support the attack. Before the corps of officers could reach the house, the party on the right had encountered the enemy, who had left the house and were drawn up in an old field opposite to it. This circumstance gave to the latter all the advantage of a surprise, and their first fire was so severe and unexpected as to oblige Horry's men to fall back in some confusion; these were, however, soon rallied by the great exertions of Captain John James. The Tories at the same time attacked on their flank by the corps of officers, and finding themselves between two fires, gave way after a few rounds and took refuge in Black Mingo swamp, which was in their rear.

Captain George Logan of Charlestown had been sick in North Carolina, but hearing that Marion had marched for

South Carolina, rose from his bed of sickness, mounted his horse, and rode eighty miles the day before the action to join him, and was killed that night at Black Mingo. Two other gallant officers, Captain Henry Mouzon and his lieutenant Joseph Scott, were by their wounds rendered unfit for further service. The strength of neither party in this affair is anywhere stated. Marion retired into North Carolina with sixty followers; ten of these were sent back under Major James to reconnoitre, but it is to be presumed with him rejoined Marion. To this small body were added at Lynch's Creek "a considerable force" under Captain John James and Henry Mouzon. With Marion there was also "a corps of supernumerary officers." From these few data it will probably be not far from the truth to estimate Marion's force on this occasion at one hundred and fifty men. The Tories were "more numerous" than the Whigs.¹ The action, although of short duration, was closely and sharply contested, the losses being about equal.

Illustrating the unsettled condition of public opinion at this time, and the wavering between the parties of those who had no interest in the original cause of the war, James relates that some of those whom Marion had thus attacked, defeated, and routed, had been lately his companions in arms. With the tact which was as distinguishing a feature in his character as his military genius, and with his full appreciation of the difficulties of the situation in which these men of the lower orders were placed between the contending forces, continually forced to take one side or the other in a cause they did not even understand, Marion's superior wisdom to that of Cornwallis was exemplified. Cornwallis ordered all men who had served under him and afterwards formed on the American side to be hanged without trial. Marion boldly

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 58.

took such men back into ranks, trusted them, and made them ever after his devoted followers.

As many of his party had left their families in much distress, Marion gave them leave to go to their homes and appointed them to meet him again at Snow Island on the Pee Dee, while he appears to have refreshed himself among the planters on the Waccamaw, while awaiting their return.¹ Becoming impatient of delay, restive under enforced inaction, and doubting whether his men would come back to him, he proposed to a few officers who were with him to abandon the hope and join the forces assembling in North Carolina. But Colonel Hugh Horry, who partook more of his confidence than any other, prevailed upon him to remain — a service on the part of Colonel Horry as meritorious as any other by which he so greatly distinguished himself in the cause of his country. Marion's men at length came in, and he marched into Williamsburg, gaining reënforcements daily. In a short time his party was four hundred strong; with these he proceeded at once to chastise the Tories, who had assisted Wemyss in desolating the country.

On his march he obtained information that Colonel Tynes was collecting a large body of Tories in the fork of Black River, distant about thirty miles. Colonel Tynes had summoned out the people of Salem and the fork of Black River, to do duty as his Majesty's subjects. Tynes lay encamped at Tarcote in the fork. Marion at once marched against him; crossing the north branch of Black River at Nelson's plantation, he came up with Tynes, surprised and completely defeated him without the loss of a man. The rout was universal, but as Tarcote swamp was near it was attended with more dismay than slaughter. The Tories lost twenty-six killed, and among the rest the

¹ Weems's *Life of Marion*, 142.

noted Captain Amos Gaskens. The most of Tynes's men soon after joined Marion and fought bravely with him.¹

In all these marches Marion and his men lay in the swamps in the open air, with little covering and with little other food than sweet potatoes and meat, mostly without salt; and though it was in the unhealthy season of autumn, yet sickness seldom occurred. Marion himself fared worse than his men, for his baggage having caught fire by accident, he had literally but half a blanket to cover him from the dews of the night, and but half a hat to shelter him from the rays of the sun. Soon after the defeat of Tynes, Marion took a position on Snow Island. This island is situated at the conflux of the Pee Dee and Lynch's Creek, is of a triangular form, and is bounded by the Pee Dee on the northeast, by Lynch's Creek on the north, and by Clark's Creek, a branch of the latter, on the west and south. Hereby having command of the rivers, he could be abundantly supplied with provisions, and his post was inaccessible except by water.

Major John Postell was stationed to guard the lower part of the Pee Dee River. While there, Captain James de Peyster of the Royal army with twenty-nine grenadiers having taken post in the house of Major Postell's father, the Major posted his small command of twenty-eight men in such position as commanded its doors, and demanded their surrender. This being refused, he set fire to an outhouse and proceeded to burn that in which they were posted, and nothing but the immediate surrender of the whole party restrained him from sacrificing his father's valuable property to gain an advantage for his country.²

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 60; Ramsay's *Hist. of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 408.

² Ramsay's *Hist. of So. Ca.*, 409.

More than a month had now passed since the overthrow and complete rout of Gates's Continental army, and yet Cornwallis was barely across the South Carolina line, nor had he been able to advance to or cross it without daily insult to the Royal army of fearless attacks by partisan bands. Davie had not hesitated to ride into his lines and carry off in the face of his Majesty's army near a hundred horses and a large stand of arms, and leaving sixty British troops dead or wounded on the field, some of these being of the vaunted Legion itself. Nor had this same officer feared with his small band to defy the whole Royal army upon its entrance into Charlotte, and had exacted tribute in twenty killed and wounded, including among the latter the leader of the Legion, before he would yield the place to them. And in Charlotte his lordship found himself unable to send out a foraging party without ample escort. His difficulties were not diminishing as he had advanced. Moreover, it had happened that on the same day, the 14th of August, the British post on the Savannah and the Tory camp on the Pee Dee had been assailed. Augusta had only been saved by stripping Ninety-Six of its garrison. The Tory camp at Black Mingo had been destroyed, and its force dispersed. Clarke, it is true, had been compelled to abandon Georgia, but he carried with him a resolute band to join Shelby — a band of men burning with wrongs and fearfully bent on revenge. Marion had established himself at Snow Island, and his lordship's communications with Charlestown were now to be subjected to continual interruption. Before Cornwallis there was a long way to Virginia, where only he could strike any effectual blow, and the road thither was beset with difficulties and dangers. Behind him was a desolate country — a country which had been prosperous and loyal until the King's army had come, but

which now in its desolation produced only rebellion. There was no regularly organized body of Whigs in South Carolina, yet his lordship realized that the extent of his conquest was measured by the tread of his sentinels.



CHAPTER XXXIV

1780

FERGUSON, it will be recollected, had recrossed the Broad as soon as he heard of the expedition against Innes at Musgrove's Mills, and had endeavored to intercept Shelby, Clarke, and Williams on their retreat. Failing in this, he had encamped for some time at Fair Forest in the Brandon settlement, from which he had sent out detachments through the country in search of the prominent Whig leaders, overawing all opposition, plundering wherever they found anything they needed or coveted, and administering the oath of allegiance to all who would take it, with liberal terms of pardon to those who had been active participators in the rebellion. He had then moved forward and crossed the North Carolina line into Tryon County, and had followed McDowell's men who had been beating about the mountain country since retiring from Smith's Ford on Broad River and were now retreating toward Watauga, in East Tennessee.

McDowell, unable to meet Ferguson on equal terms, planned an ambuscade at Cowan's Ford on Cane Creek, about fifteen miles from Gilbert Town, by which he succeeded in striking a blow and inflicting considerable loss on the enemy, killing several and, among others, severely wounding Major Dunlap. The British then retired to Gilbert Town, carrying their wounded with them; while McDowell's party, numbering about one hundred and sixty only, directed their retreat up the Catawba valley.

While at Gilbert Town, Ferguson, remembering how the mountain-men had annoyed him and his detachment on the Pacolet at Thicketty Fork and at Musgrove's Mills, paroled Samuel Philips, a distant relative of Colonel Isaac Shelby, whom he had taken prisoner, and sent him with a verbal message to the officers of the western waters of Watauga, Nolachucky, and Holston, that if they did not desist from their opposition to the British arms, he would march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay their country waste with fire and sword. This threat, says Draper, accomplished more than Ferguson bargained for. Philips, residing near Shelby's, went directly to him with the message, giving him, in addition, such intelligence as he could impart concerning the strength, locality, and intentions of the enemy.¹ Shelby immediately rode fifty or sixty miles to meet Lieutenant Colonel John Sevier, who commanded the militia in Washington County, North Carolina, now part of Tennessee, embracing the Watauga and Nolachucky settlements, to inform him of the threatening message, and to concert measures for their mutual action. The result was that they resolved to anticipate Ferguson's invasion, and to carry into effect the plan Shelby, Clarke, and Williams had formed the previous month, immediately after the battle at Musgrove's Mills, to raise all the men they could, and to surprise Ferguson in his camp, or at least attack him, before he should be prepared to meet them. The day and place of meeting were agreed upon. The time was the 25th day of September, and the Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga was selected as being the most central point and abounding most in necessary supplies.

An express was at the same time sent to Colonel Cleveland of Wilkes County, North Carolina, to apprise him of the designs and movements of the leaders on the western

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 169.



waters and to request him to meet them with all the men he could raise at the appointed place on the east side of the mountain.¹ Colonel Sevier began at once to arouse the border men for the projected enterprise. In this he encountered no difficulty. A few days brought more men to his standard than it was thought either prudent or safe to withdraw from the settlement. The whole military force of the district was estimated at considerably less than one thousand men. Fully one-half that number was necessary to man the forts and stations, and keep up scouting parties against the Indians on the extreme frontier. The remainder were immediately enrolled for the expedition. A difficulty arose from another source. Many of the volunteers were unable to furnish horses and equipment. Colonel Sevier tried to borrow money on his own responsibility to fit out and furnish the expedition; but the inhabitants, almost without exception, had expended their last dollar in taking up land, and all the money of the county was thus in the hands of the entry taker. Sevier represented to that officer that the want of means was likely to retard and, in

¹ See a most interesting sketch of Colonel Benjamin Cleveland in Draper's *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 425-454; also in Roosevelt's *Winning of the West*, 258. Colonel Cleveland was one of the most marked of the remarkable assemblage of men at King's Mountain. He had been a mighty hunter and Indian fighter, and an adventurous wanderer in the wilderness. He was inexorable in his treatment of the Tories. Draper has collected the traditions of numerous acts of great severity, if not cruelty, by him, but these are all traditions, and traditions are unreliable. They grow as they come down from one to another. The execution of Colonel Ambrose Mills and others at King's Mountain, of which we shall have to tell, — a measure of retaliation for which he was largely responsible doubtless, — had much to do with giving color to his reputation in this respect. Colonel Cleveland was not by any means a brutal man, as he has been described. His will, providing among other things for the care of his old and infirm house servants, attests a kindly disposition; nor was he an illiterate man for the times.

some measure, to frustrate his exertions to carry on the expedition, and appealed to him to lend him the money for this purpose. John Adair was the entry taker, and his reply has worthily been preserved. "Colonel Sevier, I have no authority by law to make that disposition of this money. It belongs to the impoverished treasury of North Carolina, and I dare not appropriate a cent of it to any purpose. But if the country is overrun by the British, liberty is gone. Let the money go too. Take it. If the enemy, by its use, is driven from the country, I can trust that country to justify and vindicate my conduct. Take it." The money was taken and expended in the purchase of ammunition and the necessary equipments. Shelby and Sevier pledged themselves to see it refunded, or the act of the entry taker legalized by the legislature. This was scrupulously attended to at the earliest practicable moment, and Adair was exonerated. Colonel Sevier also undertook to bring into the measure Colonel McDowell and other leaders who with their followers were then in a state of exile among the western settlers. In this, it is scarcely necessary to say, he succeeded at once.

To Shelby was assigned the part of securing the coöperation of the riflemen of western Virginia. These had in many a past campaign with the pioneers of Tennessee bivouacked and fought and triumphed together over a savage foe, and it was now deemed essential to obtain the aid of these gallant men in resisting the invasion of the common country. Shelby accordingly hastened home, wrote a letter to William Campbell, Colonel Commandant of Washington County, Virginia, now part of Kentucky, and sent it by his brother, Moses Shelby, to the house of Campbell, a distance of forty miles. In this letter Shelby stated what had been determined by Sevier and himself and urged Campbell to join them with his regi-



ment. This Colonel Campbell hesitated and at first refused to do. Considering his first duty to be to Virginia, he proposed to march down to the southern border of Virginia and there to be ready to meet and oppose Cornwallis when he approached that State. With this answer Shelby was much disappointed; but he did not give up the project, and upon a second letter to Colonel Campbell, giving additional reasons in favor of the proposed campaign, Campbell replied, agreeing to coöperate with his whole force.

The camp on the Watauga, says Ramsey,¹ on the 25th of September, presented an animated spectacle. With the exception of the few colonists on the distant Cumberland, the entire military force of what is now Tennessee was assembled at the Sycamore Shoals. Scarce a single gunman remained at home that day. The young and ardent had generally enrolled themselves for the campaign against Ferguson. The less vigorous and more aged were left with the inferior guns in the settlements, for their protection against the Indians, but all had attended the rendezvous. The old men were there to counsel, encourage, and stimulate the youthful soldiers and to receive from the Colonels instructions for the defence of the stations during their absence. Others were there to bring in rich profusion the products of their farms, which were cheerfully furnished gratuitously and without stint, to complete the outfit of the expedition. Gold and silver they had not, but substance and clothing and equipments and the good horse, anything the frontiersman owned, in the cabin, the field, or the range, was offered unostentatiously upon the altar of his country. The women were there, and with suppressed sighs witnessed the departure of husbands, lovers, and brothers. There were the heroic mothers,

¹ Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*.

with a mournful but noble pride to take a fond farewell of their gallant sons. The sparse settlements of this frontier had never before seen assembled together a concourse of people so immense and so agitated by great excitement. The large mass of the assembly were volunteer riflemen, clad in the homespun of their women folk, and wearing the hunting shirt so characteristic of the backwood soldiery, and not a few of them, the moccasins of their own manufacture. A few officers were better dressed, but all in citizens' clothing. In the seclusion of their homes in the West many of these volunteers had only heard of war at a distance, and had been in undisputed possession of that independence for which their Atlantic countrymen were now struggling. The near approach of Ferguson had awakened them from their security, and indignant at the violence and depredation of his followers, they were embodied to chastise and avenge them. This they had done at the suggestion and upon the motion of their own leaders without any call from Congress or the officers of the Continental army. The attitude of these volunteer detachments was as forlorn as it was gallant. At the time of their embodiment, and for several days after they had marched, it was not known to them that a single armed corps of Americans was marshalled for their assistance or relief.

The little army organized at Sycamore Shoals consisted of 400 men from Virginia commanded by Colonel Campbell, 240 under Lieutenant Colonel Sevier, and 240 under Colonel Shelby, and the refugee Whigs 160 in number under Colonel Charles McDowell — all but the Virginians were from North Carolina, which then however included the present State of Tennessee. All were mounted and nearly all armed with a piece known as the Deckhard rifle, remarkable for the precision and distance of its shot.



Without delay, early on the morning of the 26th, the little army was on the march. But before the troops left the camp the officers requested that they should assemble for the purpose of commending themselves to Divine protection and guidance. They promptly complied with the request. Prayer, solemn and appropriate, was offered by a clergyman present, and the riflemen mounted their horses and started on the expedition against Ferguson. There was no staff, no quartermaster, no commissary, no surgeon. As in all their Indian campaigns, being mounted and unencumbered with baggage, their motions were rapid. While in the settlement some beeves were driven in the rear to furnish subsistence, but they impeded the rapidity of the march, and after the first day were abandoned.¹ On the second day two men disappeared. It was at once believed that they had deserted and would doubtless escape to the enemy and apprise them of their approach, which afterwards proved to be true. Acting upon the assumption that their movement would soon be known to the enemy, the mountain men turned aside to the left, descending by a most dangerous path. Reaching the foot of the mountains on Saturday, the 30th, they were joined on the Catawba River by the troops from Wilkes and Surry counties, under the leadership of Colonel Cleveland and Major Winston, reported at the time at 800, but really numbering only 350.² Resuming their march on Monday, the 1st of October, they advanced some eighteen miles, but were prevented from further progress by a rain which set in, and which delayed them the next day. While thus remaining in a camp on the 2d, in a gap at South Mountain, a consultation of the officers was

¹ Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*, 225, 230.

² *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 184; Ramsey, *supra*; Simms's *Hist. So. Ca.* (1842), 338.

held for the purpose of forming some better organization, as the disorders and irregularities which began to prevail among the troops unaccustomed to discipline and restraint occasioned no little uneasiness. Colonel McDowell, the senior officer present, presided. It was suggested that inasmuch as the troops were from different States no one properly had the right to command the whole, and as it was important that there should be a military head to their organization, a messenger should be sent to General Gates wherever he might be found, informing him of their situation, and requesting him to send a general officer to take the command. This was agreed to, but as expedition and dispatch were all important at this critical juncture, it was proposed, in the meanwhile, that the corps commanders should converse in council daily to determine on the measures for the ensuing day, and to appoint one of their own number to put them in execution. Colonel Shelby, wisely, was not satisfied with this arrangement, observing that they were within but sixteen or eighteen miles of Gilbert Town, where they supposed Ferguson to be, who would certainly attack them if strong enough to do so, or avoid them if too weak until he could collect more men or obtain a reinforcement with which they would not dare to cope, and hence it behooved them to act with decision and promptitude. They needed at once an efficient head and vigorous movements, and he proposed that as all the commanding officers were North Carolinians except Colonel Campbell, who was from Virginia, but who was known to be a man of good sense and devoted to the cause, and commanded the largest number of men present, he should be made commanding officer until a general officer should arrive from headquarters, and that they march immediately against the enemy. Colonel Campbell modestly hesitated to accept the important trust and urged



Shelby himself to assume the command. Colonel McDowell, who was entitled to the command if any one was, but who had the good of his country at heart more than any title to command, submitted gracefully to what was done; but observed that as he could not be permitted to command he would, if agreeable, convey to headquarters the request for a general officer. This was warmly approved, as no one better than himself could explain the situation and concert with General Gates a plan of future operations. McDowell at once set off on his mission, leaving his men under the command of his brother Major Joseph McDowell. The hope was entertained that General Morgan, who had gained such renown at Saratoga, and who had recently joined General Gates, would be sent to command them.¹

On the morning of the 3d of October, while still in the gap at South Mountain, the officers took occasion before taking up the line of march to address a few stirring words to their followers. A circle was formed, and Colonel Cleveland thus addressed them: —

“Now, my brave fellows, I have come to tell you the news. The enemy is at hand, and we must up and at them. Now is the time for every man of you to do his country a priceless service — such as shall lead your children to exult in the fact that their fathers were the conquerors of Ferguson. When the pinch comes, I shall be with you. But if any of you shrink from sharing in the battle and glory, you can now have the opportunity of backing out and leaving, and you shall have a few minutes for considering the matter.”

McDowell and Shelby made similar addresses, after which the word was given by the officers to their respective commands that “those who desired *to back out* should step three paces in the rear.” Not a man accepted the offer. These appeals and the manner in which they were received

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 183-189.

had the happy effect of inspiring confidence in the ranks, each man feeling that he could implicitly rely on his fellows to stand by him to the last. The march was resumed, but little progress made that day. The next day, October the 4th, they renewed the march, fording and refording Cane Creek many times, as the trail then ran, and at night reached the neighborhood of Gilbert Town. There they learned from Jonathan Hampton that Ferguson had retreated from Gilbert Town, and that it was his purpose to evade an engagement. Here came in a party of thirty Georgians, under Major Chandler and Captain Johnston, of Colonel Clarke's party of refugees, who, learning of the assembling of the mountaineers to attack Ferguson, immediately left Clarke to join them. It was generally reported that Ferguson had gone some fifty or sixty miles southwardly, and two men came into camp who represented that he had directed his course to Ninety-Six, well-nigh one hundred miles away. It is necessary now to go back a little, and to recur to another part of the field to find out who these men were, and to explain their motives for this representation.

It will be recollected that when Clarke, to whom the prisoners taken at Musgrove's Mills had been committed, determined to return to Georgia on the expedition against Augusta, he had turned over the prisoners to Colonel Williams. This officer proceeded with them to Hillsboro in North Carolina, where he safely lodged them with General Gates, who was there attempting to gather and reorganize his routed army. It so happened that Governor Rutledge, who since his escape from Tarleton at Rugeley's Mills had gone to Philadelphia appealing to Congress and to the other States for assistance, urging the necessity of reënforcement, was now at Hillsboro where the General Assembly of North Carolina was also sitting, concerting

with Governor Nash and General Gates upon the reorganization and supply of the army. Colonel Williams's arrival there with the news of the victory at Musgrove's Mills, and the proof of the good news in the possession of the prisoners he brought, was the first gleam of encouragement the despairing patriots at Hillsboro had received since Gates's overwhelming defeat. Williams was the only one to tell the story of the battle, and his part in it was probably not represented any the less because of that circumstance. But however that may have been, Governor Rutledge, regarding him as a valiant man that "cometh with good tidings," rewarded him with a commission of Brigadier General, and Governor Nash with the privilege of organizing a corps of mounted men in North Carolina.

Sumter, after the surprise and defeat at Fishing Creek, had soon returned to the field and established himself at his old quarters at Clem's Creek. From that point he sent Colonel Lacey into the country between the Broad and Catawba, now York and Chester counties, to beat up more men from among the Scotch-Irish there and to organize a mounted corps. All his former officers soon collected around Sumter, and he was busy reorganizing his party in camp when Williams made his appearance, had his commission publicly read, and called upon all the officers and men to fall in under his immediate command. This they flatly refused to do, and Williams was compelled to retire. Two equally conclusive reasons controlled the conduct of Sumter's men upon this occasion. The first was personal devotion to Sumter, and the second, animosity to Williams himself.

Sumter's men were volunteers. While the State was without government, and while Governor Rutledge was in Philadelphia and Virginia appealing in vain to Congress for adequate assistance, and to Governor Jefferson

for aid, these men had voluntarily organized themselves without commissions and had chosen Sumter as their leader. Their organization was certainly very irregular, and there was little discipline among them. Indeed, so little did authority weigh that a council was held before every move was made, and a vote of the whole body was necessary for an undertaking. And however objectionable such a proceeding might appear in the eyes of the military critic, they knew that they had in this way thus far kept up the war against the invaders, had gained great and material advantages over them — advantages which had been lost to them by the folly and incompetence of the professional soldiers of the Continental army who had been grudgingly sent for the defence of the State. In this view they no doubt underrated the necessity of a proper military organization, but organization or not, they would fight under none but their own chosen leader.

On the other hand, they would have Williams neither as a commander nor as a companion. They regarded him as a deserter and an embezzler. To understand this, recurrence must be had to some events of the early summer. While Sumter was organizing his force on this same spot early in the summer, Williams and some of his companions of Little River region had removed their families and all their effects to Granville County, North Carolina, where he had formerly lived, and had returned and joined Sumter, Williams frankly admitting that as he had brought with him no men he could claim no command, but nevertheless wished to serve his country in some position of usefulness. Colonel Hill, who knew him, suggested to Sumter, who needed an efficient commissary, the appointment of Williams, and he was accordingly appointed to serve in that capacity. An officer and twenty-five men with four teams and wagons were assigned to his service,



and everything went well until after the battle of Hanging Rock on the 6th of August. But while Sumter was encamped on Cane Creek in the Waxhaws about the 12th of August, it was discovered that Williams had decamped without a word to Sumter on the subject, taking with him Colonel Brandon and a small party of followers, mostly of the Fair Forest region, together with a number of horses and other public supplies. Sumter and his officers were naturally indignant, and Colonel Lacey with a small guard was sent after the party for the purpose at least of recovering the public property. Colonel Hill in his narrative states that Lacey overtook the fugitive encamped on the western side of the Catawba, but finding Williams's party too strong to attempt coercive measures, resorted to other means to accomplish his purpose. Lacey, who was a man of remarkable personal prowess as well as courage, invited Williams to take a walk with him, and as soon as out of reach of the camp turned suddenly upon him and presenting a pistol to his breast threatened him with instant death. Upon which Williams pledged his word of honor that he would take back all the public property and as many of the men as he could prevail upon to return with him. But once free from the duress, Williams, regardless of his promise, had hastened with his party and public property to Smith's Ford, where he joined McDowell, and, as we have seen, participated in the successful expedition against the enemy at Musgrove's Mills. Williams, no doubt, justified himself in the matter by arguing that he had as much right to judge of what was best for the country as Sumter, who had no more of a commission than himself, and that it was as necessary to be carrying the war into his section, the Fair Forest region, as into the Waxhaws to which Sumter was practically restricting himself. But however such specious arguments may have satisfied his

own conscience, they made no impression on the minds of Sumter's men, who regarded him in the light of a deserter and betrayer of a trust.¹

Soon after this Cornwallis had detached Rawdon and Tarleton to surprise Sumter and break up his new camp, but Sumter, learning of his movement, crossed the Catawba to the west side at Biger's (afterwards Mason's) Ferry, and there encamped. At this camp a convention or council was called by Colonel Hill to consider the matter of Williams's commission and its effect upon Sumter's command. A skirmish between Rawdon's advance and Sumter's across the river broke up the convention, but it resumed its deliberations as soon as the party had marched to a safe distance up the river. It was then determined to send a delegation to Governor Rutledge at Hillsboro, remonstrating against Williams's commission as superseding Sumter's. The delegates were Colonel Richard Winn, Colonel Henry Hampton, Colonel Thomas, Colonel Myddleton,² and, it is supposed, Colonel Thomas Taylor.³ It was also agreed that Sumter should retire during the absence of these gentlemen, and that in the meanwhile Colonel Hill and Colonel Lacey should command Sumter's party. Hill and Lacey then continued the march up the river, which they recrossed at Tuckasegee Ford, a few miles north of Charlotte, with the intention of forming a junction with General Davidson and the North Carolina militia. An express was sent to Davidson, from whom Hill and Lacey learned in reply that a number of men from the west as well as from the east of the mountains were marching with the

¹ Hill's narrative, MSS. ; *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 165-168, 465-467.

² This name is usually spelt in the histories *Middelton*, but his signature in the Sumter MSS. is *Chas. S. Myddleton*. He was from Orangeburgh District.

³ *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 168.



intention of attacking Colonel Ferguson. Upon this information the party again crossed the Catawba a little higher up, at Beattie's Ford. Here Williams again made his appearance, and in the absence of Sumter again asserted his right to command, but which was not allowed.

Upon the refusal of Sumter's men to receive him, Williams returned to North Carolina, and on the 23d of September, the day after, as it happened, that Cornwallis entered Charlotte, he issued a call for recruits which was headed "A call to arms," "Beef, Bread, and Potatoes," and was based, as was understood, on the fact that Governor Nash had given orders to the commissaries of the State to furnish Williams with such supplies as might be necessary. Under this call Williams enlisted about seventy men while encamped at Higgins's plantation, in what is now Rowan County. Colonel Brandon and Major Samuel Hammond, also from the Ninety-Six District in South Carolina, were his lieutenants. Colonel Hill in his narrative is scarcely more complimentary to the character of the men Williams thus collected than to that of Williams himself; he describes them as "such as did not choose to do duty under their own officers," and who were induced to engage under him by Williams "promising them that if they would go with him to South Carolina, they would get as many negroes and horses as they chose to take from the Tories." In regard to the first part of this criticism upon the character of these men, it is to be observed that the terms of Governor Nash's order warranted Williams in obtaining volunteers from other commands, for it especially directed him "in getting your men you are to make no distinction between men already drafted and others."¹ As to the second, it may be that in the loose morality of a civil war the promise of spoils was

¹ *No. Ca.*, 1780-1781 (Schenck), 143.

often more efficacious as an inducement to recruits than that of liberty;¹ but however this may have been in this instance, Williams was not singular in resorting to such, in order to fill his ranks.² Having raised this little force, Williams again turned toward South Carolina, and pushing forward some sixty or seventy miles southwest of Salisbury, where, after crossing the Catawba at the Tuckasegee Ford on the 2d of October,³ he came up with Sumter's party. Upon joining them he again had his commission read, and required Hill and Lacey to submit to his authority. This was again indignantly refused, Hill informing him that there was not an officer or a man among them who would submit to his command, and also that the delegation had been sent to Governor Rutledge upon the subject. Williams thereupon withdrew and formed his camp at a distance from that of Hill and Lacey.

On the same day Colonel Graham and Hambright joined the South Carolinians with a small party of some sixty men from the neighborhood of Gilbert Town. That evening Colonel Hill suggested to Colonel Lacey that as they might soon have to encounter an enemy superior to all their parties together, it might be better to conciliate Colonel Williams so as not to lose his assistance, though small was his party. This Colonel Lacey approved, and it was proposed that the troops should be organized into three divisions, to wit: the South Carolinians under Hill and Lacey; the North Carolinians under Graham and Hambright; and Williams and his followers, who had now been joined by Captain Roebuck's company, perhaps some twenty or thirty in number—a commanding officer to be

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 192.

² See letter of Colonel Richard Hampton to Major John Hampton, April 2, 1781; Gibbes's *Documentary Hist.*, 47; and *post*.

³ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 192.

chosen for the whole. The next morning these propositions were submitted to Williams, but he "spurned them," asserting his right by his commission to command the whole. Upon this he was warned to absent himself, and not attempt to march with either Graham's or Hill's party. Williams then acquiesced, and an officer was chosen to command. Who was the officer is not mentioned by Hill. That day scouts came in with the intelligence that the mountain men were advancing; and the next, the 5th, they learned that Ferguson had sent a dispatch to Lord Cornwallis, that he had pitched his camp in a strong position; that he had completed the business of his mission in collecting and training the friends of the King in that quarter, so that he could now bring a reënforcement of upwards of one thousand men to the Royal army; but that, as the intervening distance, thirty or forty miles, to Charlotte was through a rebellious country, he asked that his lordship would send Tarleton with his horse and infantry to escort him to headquarters.¹

During the day Williams and Brandon disappeared, and Colonel Hill was informed that they had taken a pathway that led to the mountains. They returned after sunset, when Hill immediately demanded to know where they had been. This Williams refused to tell, but upon Hill's insisting that as honorable men they were bound to impart whatever knowledge they had gained for the good of the whole, Williams at length acknowledged that they had visited the mountain men, who were on the march from the neighborhood of Gilbert Town, and stated that these men expected them to form a junction with them at the Old Iron Works at Lawson's Fork, in what is now Spartanburg County, South Carolina. To this Hill remarked that that would be marching directly out of the way from

¹ Hill's narrative, Sumter MSS.

Ferguson, while it was undoubtedly the purpose of the mountain men to fight Ferguson, who had sent to Cornwallis for Tarleton to go to his relief. That this reinforcement might be expected in a day or two, and that if the battle was not fought before Tarleton's arrival, it was very certain it would not be fought at all; that Ferguson was now in South Carolina within striking distance, and it appeared as if Heaven had in mercy sent these mountain men to punish the arch enemy of the people. Colonel Hill states that Williams seemed for some moments embarrassed, but finally admitted that he had made use of deception in order to direct the attention of the mountaineers to Ninety-Six. "I then used the freedom to tell him," says Colonel Hill, "that I plainly saw through his design, which was to get the army into his own settlement, as well as to get some of his property, and plunder the Tories." In the course of the conversation Williams declared with considerable warmth that the North Carolinians might fight Ferguson or let it alone, that their business was to fight for their own country. Hill immediately informed Lacey of this conversation, and expressed the opinion that if they did not get better information Ferguson would undoubtedly escape. It will be recognized at once that Williams and Brandon were the two men who had reported to the mountain men that Ferguson had gone to Ninety-Six. Hill was still suffering from the wound he had received at Hanging Rock, carrying his arm still in a sling, so Lacey undertook to make his way across to the mountain men to correct any false impressions which Williams might have made upon them. A guide was procured, and Lacey started with him about eight o'clock in the evening. In crossing the spur of a mountain they lost the path, and Lacey was on the point of killing the guide, believing that he was betrayed and

misled by him, when, fortunately, just before day, he found himself in the camp of his friends. Lacey was at once taken in charge, blindfolded, and conducted to the colonels, to whom he introduced himself as Colonel Lacey. The officers at first repulsed his advances, taking him to be a Tory spy. He had the address, however, to convince them that he was no impostor, and learned from them that Williams and Brandon had been with them, and represented that Ferguson had gone to Ninety-Six, and that they had agreed to form a junction with the South Carolinians on Lawson's Fork of Pacolet. This confirmed Lacey in the opinion formed by Hill and himself of Williams's intention to mislead the mountain men into his own part of the country, upon the belief that they were following Ferguson; and Campbell and his associates were not a little indignant at the deception which had been practised upon them, and which had so nearly defeated the whole object of their expedition. Lacey undertook to bring the South Carolinians to the mountaineers, and it was agreed that the junction should be formed the next evening at "the Cowpens," a point nearly midway between the Broad and Pacolet rivers, in what is now Spartanburg County, between three and four miles below the North Carolina line—a spot which was soon itself to become famous as the battle-field of a great American victory.

Lacey's jaded horse having been well provided for, himself partaken of a frugal repast, and taking only a few hours' sleep, started back before day, and reached his camp at about ten o'clock, having ridden about sixty miles in fourteen hours.¹ Williams, intent upon carrying his point of getting control of Sumter's men, and marching them toward Ninety-Six, had, before Lacey's return, gone the rounds of the camp of the South Carolinians, ordering

¹ *Life of General Edward Lacey* (Moore), 16-17.

officers and men to prepare to march for the Old Iron Works; but Colonel Hill followed quickly, exposing his designs and directing the men to await Colonel Lacey's return, that they might know certainly to what point to march, in order to form the expected junction with their friends from the West. He urged the folly of making a foray into the region of Ninety-Six, simply for the sake of Tory booty, when Ferguson with his strong force would be left in the rear to entrap and cut them off. Colonel Hill then called upon all who loved their country and were ready to stand firmly by it in its hour of distress to form a line on the right; and those who preferred to plunder rather than courageously to meet the enemy, to form a line on the left. Colonel Hill adds that the greater portion took their places on the right, leaving but a few followers of Williams to occupy the other position. Upon Lacey's return the march to join the mountaineers was immediately commenced. Williams and his followers hung upon the rear of the column, evidently afraid to separate themselves from their former comrades, and finally abandoned the idea of going alone to Ninety-Six. About sunset, after a march of some twenty miles, the South Carolinians arrived at the Cowpens, where they were soon after joined by the mountaineers.

Colonel Lacey's visit had been most opportune. It had not only decided the course of his own party, but had prevented the abandonment of the expedition by the western men. Some, at least, of the leaders of these had begun to doubt the policy of continuing the uncertain pursuit of Ferguson, lest by being led too far away their prolonged absence from their mountain homes might invite a raid from the hostile Cherokees upon their unprotected families. Lacey's information and spirited appeals reassured the timid, and imparted new courage to the hopeful. In-



stead of directing their course, as they otherwise would have done, to the Old Iron Works, on Lawson's Fork of the Pacolet, some fifteen miles out of their way, they marched direct for Cowpens, a distance of some twenty miles, all together reaching the place of rendezvous, as has just been said, soon after sunset, a short time after the arrival of the Carolinians and their associates under Colonels Hill, Lacey, Williams, and Graham.

For an hour or two on the evening of the 6th of October there was a stirring bivouac at the Cowpens. This was one of the cowpens, or ranches, spoken of in a chapter on the settlement of the upper country in a former work.¹ It was owned by a wealthy English Tory named Saunders² who resided there, and who reared large numbers of cattle, several of which were at once slaughtered to feed the hungry Whigs. While the men and horses were refreshed, scouts were sent out to ascertain the exact position of Ferguson and his command.

¹ *So. Ca. under Roy. Gov.* (McCrady), 296.

² Johnson, in his *Life of Greene*, says that the name of the owner was Hannah, and that the place was called Hannah's Cowpen. Vol. I, 377. Draper gives the name as Saunders. *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 223.

CHAPTER XXXV

1780

THE order of Cornwallis's advance proposed that his lordship with the main army should pass through the most hostile parts of both of the two provinces, the Waxhaws in South Carolina and Mecklenburg County in North Carolina, while Ferguson was to move by the foot of the mountains, and Tarleton to pursue an intermediate course through the country between the Broad and the Catawba.¹ It has been seen how his lordship's advance had been insulted—to use the expression of the times—and attacked by Davie, and his entrance into Charlotte withstood, and how Dunlap, Ferguson's lieutenant, had been repulsed by McDowell at Cowen's Ford. Ferguson appears to have been more intent upon intercepting Clarke's fugitives from Georgia than coöperating with his lordship. While at Gilbert Town he had furloughed many of his Tory followers upon their promise

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 215.

We shall follow in this chapter very closely Draper's account in his *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, a work of the greatest care and labor, which must remain the foundation of all other histories of an event of momentous influence in the history of this country—a work which has not received the credit due it. In Governor Roosevelt's *Winning of the West* there is also a most intensely interesting and admirable account of the battle. While so availing ourselves of and following Draper's account of this battle, we are enabled to supplement it by Colonel Hill's MS. account found among General Sumter's papers, and we believe for the first time quoted. This account of Hill's time gives the particulars of the movements of the Carolina men.

to rejoin him on a short notice, and had tarried there longer than a due regard for his lordship's movement warranted. It is probable that his object in furloughing so many at this juncture was that by scattering them to their homes in the country through which Clarke's men were likely to pass, he would secure the earliest information of their approach. With the same purpose he moved, on the 27th of September, to the Green River region. While there on the 30th, little dreaming of any impending danger, he was rudely awakened from his sense of security. The two Whig deserters who had left the mountain men on the second day of their march arrived in camp, with the alarming intelligence of their approach. These "Back-water men," as Ferguson termed them, to whom he had sent the message by Philips, were coming themselves with the answer. They had not awaited his leisure to inflict the punishment he had threatened, but were now close at hand to dare him to attempt it. This watch and delay, in order to entrap the Georgians and the threat to the mountaineers, brought about his own speedy destruction.

Ferguson at once recognized the danger of his situation, but was apparently still reluctant to give up the hope of cutting off the retreat of Clarke's party. He promptly sent dispatches to Cornwallis, informing him of his danger, and of his purpose to hasten to join his lordship;¹ and on the same day, the 30th, he wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Cruger for reënforcements. The mutilations and ciphers in Cruger's reply, found on Ferguson's body after his death at King's Mountain, conceals the exact number he called for; but it was doubtless considerable, for Cruger writes: "I begin to think our views for the present

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 222; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 164.

rather large. We have been led to this probably in expecting too much from the militia, as, for instance, you call for . . . regiment. There are but just one-half that number. . . .”¹ But while sending out these appeals for reënforcements and promising Cornwallis to join him, the fatal infatuation of intercepting Clarke still delayed him. He kept out scouts in every direction seeking information as to the Georgians, while the Virginians, North and South Carolinians, were drawing their net closer and closer around him. On Sunday, the 1st of October, while beating about the country, he visited Baylis Earle’s plantation on North Pacolet, where his men destroyed and plundered at pleasure. He then marched to Denard’s (or Donard’s) Ford, on the Broad River, making his camp there for the night. From this place he issued the following curious proclamation :²—

“DENARD’S FORD, BROAD RIVER. }
“Tryon County, October 1, 1780. }

“GENTLEMEN: Unless you wish to be eat up by an inundation of barbarians, who have begun by murdering an unarmed son before the aged father, and afterwards lopped off his arms, and who, by these shocking cruelties and irregularities, give the best proof of their cowardice and want of discipline—I say, if you wish to be pinioned, robbed, and murdered, and see your wives and daughters in four days abused by the dregs of mankind—in short, if you wish or deserve to live and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp.

“The Back-water men have crossed the mountains. McDowell, Hampton, Shelby, and Cleveland are at their heads, so that you know what you have to depend upon. If you choose to be degraded forever and ever by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let your women turn their backs upon you and look out for real men to protect them.

“PATRICK FERGUSON, Major 71st Regiment.”

¹ Ramsey’s *Annals of Tennessee*, 242.

² *King’s Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 204 ; Ramsey’s *Annals of Tennessee*.

From Denard's Ford, Ferguson and his troops, according to Allaire's Diary, marched on Monday afternoon, the 2d, only four miles, where they formed in line of action and lay on their arms all night. They moved at four o'clock the next morning, marching about twenty miles that day on a route north of main Broad River, and halted near one Tate's plantation. These desultory movements of Ferguson indicate an indecision not at all in accordance with his general character. It was still the fatal hope of interrupting Clarke that enthralled him. It is possible, moreover, says Draper, that Ferguson might have felt the necessity of feeling his way carefully, that while evading the mountaineers on the one hand, he should not run recklessly into other dangers which might prove equally as formidable; for Lord Cornwallis had, on the 23d of September, apprised him that Colonel Davie's party of Whig cavalry had marched against him, which Ferguson's apprehensions and Tory fears may have magnified into a much larger body than eighty dragoons.¹ Ferguson tarried two full days at Tate's, probably awaiting intelligence as to the movements of the Whigs. This he probably received on the evening of the 5th, for the army renewed its march at four o'clock on Friday morning, the 6th. During this day Colonel Ferguson sent the following dispatch to Lord Cornwallis, without date, but the time of which Draper no doubt fixes correctly: —

"MY LORD: A doubt does not remain with regard to the intelligence I sent your lordship. They are since joined by Clarke and Sumter, of course are become an object of some consequence. Happily their leaders are obliged to feed their followers with such hopes, and so to flatter them with accounts of our weakness and fear that if

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 207; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, note E, chap. III, 192.

necessary I should hope for success against them myself; but numbers compared, that must be doubtful.

I am on my march toward you by a road leading from Cherokee Ford, north of King's Mountain. Three or four hundred good soldiers, part dragoons, would finish the business. *Something must be done soon.* This is their last push in this quarter, etc.

"PATRICK FERGUSON."

Unfortunately for Ferguson neither of his dispatches reached his lordship in time. His first dispatch, of the 30th of September, was intrusted to Abraham Collins and Peter Quinn, who resided on the borders of the two Carolinas, and were well acquainted with the route. Enjoined to make the utmost expedition and deliver the letter as soon as possible, they took the most direct course. On their way they stopped at the house of Alexander Henry, a good Whig, and disguising their true character and mission obtained refreshments. But renewing their journey with undue haste, the suspicions of Mr. Henry's family were excited and Mr. Henry's sons immediately set out in pursuit. They followed closely in the trail; but the Tory messengers, anticipating this by taking a circuitous route, misled them. In doing so, however, the dispatch was delayed on its course, and did not reach Cornwallis till the morning of the 7th of October, the day of Ferguson's final overthrow. The second dispatch fell into the hands of the Whigs. No effort was therefore made by Cornwallis for the relief of Ferguson. In the meanwhile a small party of Clarke's men, whom Ferguson had wished so much to intercept, under Major Chronicle, had actually joined Williams, and served to swell that small corps.¹

Resuming his march at four o'clock on the morning of the 6th, Ferguson marched up the Old Cherokee Ferry road between the waters of Buffalo and King's Creek

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 227.





until he came to the forks near where now is Whitaker's Station on the present Southern Railroad. There he took the right prong leading across King's Creek, through a pass in the mountain, and on in the direction of Yorkville. Here, a short distance after crossing the creek on the right of the road, about 350 yards from the pass, he came to King's Mountain 16 miles from Tate's, his last halting-place.

The King's Mountain range is about 16 miles in length, extending from the northeast in North Carolina in a southwesterly course, sending out several lateral spurs in various directions. The principal elevation in this range, a sort of lofty rocky tower called *The Pinnacle*, is some 6 miles distant from the battle-ground. That portion of it now historically famous is in York County, South Carolina, about a mile and a half south of the North Carolina line. It is some 600 yards long and about 250 from one base across to the other, or from 60 to 120 wide on the top, tapering to the south.¹ Mills describes this fatal hill as a long stony ridge very narrow at the top, on which lines could not be thrown up, and so narrow that a man standing on it might be shot from either side. The supply of water was inconvenient to procure.² Its summit was some 60 feet above the level of the surrounding country. As Draper observes, Ferguson's dispatch to Lord Cornwallis, written the day before the battle, shows conclusively that this mountain bore its prefix of "King's" at that time, and that its subsequent occupancy by the King's troops had nothing to do in giving to it this appellation. Indeed, Moultrie says that it took its name from one King who lived at the foot of the mountain.³ Strange to say, Ferguson deliberately chose this spot, stoutly affirming

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 209.

² Mills's *Statistics*, 778.

³ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 243.

that upon it he would be able to destroy any force the Whigs could bring against him. So confident was he in the strength of the position that he declared that God Almighty could not drive him from it. The only redeeming feature of the place was the abundance of wood with which to form abatis, but Ferguson did not avail himself of this means of defence, and only placed his baggage wagons along the northeastern part of the mountain, in the neighborhood of headquarters, so as to form some slight appearance of protection. Here he remained inactive and exposed, awaiting the return of his furloughed men and the expected succor. Within some thirty-five miles of his lordship's camp, a distance he could easily have traversed, says Draper, in a few hours, yet he lingered two days at Tate's and one on King's Mountain, deluded with the hope of gaining undying laurels when Fate, the fickle goddess, had only in store for him defeat, disaster, and death.

Draper gives interesting stories of the exploits of the spies sent out from the Whig bivouac at Cowpens. John Kerr, a cripple, at this time a member of Williams's party, had been dispatched to gain intelligence of Ferguson, and found him at Peter Quinn's, six or seven miles from King's Mountain, and intending to march to that point during the afternoon. It was a region of many Tories, and Kerr found no difficulty in gaining access to Ferguson's camp. Having been a cripple from his infancy, he passed unsuspected of his true character, making anxious inquiries relative to taking protection, and professedly gratified on learning good news concerning the King's cause and prospects. After managing, by his natural shrewdness and good sense, to make all the observations he could, he quietly retired, making his way, probably in a somewhat circuitous course, to rejoin his countrymen. As they were on the wing,

he did not overtake them till the evening of that day at the Cowpens, when he was able to report to the Whig chiefs Ferguson's movements and position, and that his numbers did not exceed fifteen hundred men. Encouraged by this report, the Whig leaders determined, nevertheless, to obtain yet later intelligence, and Enoch Gilmer, a shrewd, cunning fellow and a stranger to fear, was selected among others and started off on his mission. He called at a Tory's house not many miles in advance, and represented to him that he had been waiting on Ferguson's supposed route from Denard's Ford to Ninety-Six, intending to join his forces; but Ferguson not marching in that direction, he was now seeking his camp. The Tory, not suspecting Gilmer's true character, frankly related all he knew or had learned of Ferguson's movements and intentions. Gilmer returned to the Cowpens before the troops took up their line of march that evening.

Meanwhile a council was held in which the newly joined officers, with the exception of Colonel Williams, participated. Colonel Campbell was retained in chief command, "in courtesy," says Colonel Hill, "to him and his regiment, who had marched the greatest distance." Men and horses refreshed, they started about nine o'clock on their night's march in quest of Ferguson. To what extent the North and South Carolinians who joined the mountain men at the Cowpens added to their numbers, says Draper, is not certainly known, but as they were less jaded than the others, they probably reached about their full quota of 400. Williams had a few days before called them in round numbers 450, including his own corps. Thus the combined force at the Cowpens was about 1100 men, and nearly all well armed with rifles. A selection was made by the officers from the several parties, so that the whole number of mounted men finally chosen to attack Ferguson was

about 910, besides a squad of uncounted footmen. The relative strength of the respective corps was probably as follows: Campbell's men 200, Shelby's 120, Sevier's 120, Cleveland's 110, McDowell's 90, and Winston's 60, making 700 chosen at Green River. Additional troops selected at the Cowpens: Lacey's 100, Williams's 60, and Graham's and Hambright's 50, making 210, — total combined forces 910 mounted men. The few footmen who followed generally joined their respective corps; some united with the column most convenient to them when the time of the trial arrived.

The night was very dark; a drizzling rain soon set in which at least a part of the time became very hard. While the road was pretty good, yet from the darkness the guides of Campbell's men lost their way, and his corps became much confused and scattered through the woods; so that when morning appeared the rear portion, as Hill's narrative informs us, was not more than five miles from the Cowpens. Discovering the absence of the Virginians, men were sent from the front at the dawn of day in all directions till the wanderers were found and brought in. Once more united, with the light of day to guide them, the Whigs pushed forward with great earnestness. They had designed crossing Broad River at Tate's, since Deer's (or Dare's) Ferry, as the most direct route to King's Mountain; but as they came near they concluded to bear down the river some two and a half miles to the Cherokee Ford, lest the enemy, peradventure, might be in possession of the eastern bank of the stream at Tate's Crossing. It was near daylight when, on the River Hill, Gilmer was again sent forward to reconnoitre at the ford. While awaiting his return, orders were given to the men to keep their guns dry, as it was still raining. Gilmer returned, reporting the river clear. It was about sunrise when they reached the river, which,



though deep, was crossed without loss or difficulty. The Whigs had now marched some eighteen miles, and were yet some fifteen miles from King's Mountain. After passing the river Gilmer was again sent forward. The officers rode at a slow gait in front of their men. Some three miles above Cherokee Ford they came to Ferguson's former encampment, where they halted a short time, taking such a snack as their wallets and saddle-bags afforded. The rain continued to fall so heavily during the forenoon that Colonels Campbell, Sevier, and Cleveland concluded from the weary and jaded condition of both men and beasts it was best to halt and refresh them. Many of the horses had given out. But against this Shelby protested, and the march was continued. The men could only keep their guns dry by wrapping their bags, blankets, and hunting shirts around the locks, thus leaving their own persons exposed to the inclemency of the weather. Proceeding a mile after the proposed halt, they learned from a half-Whig, half-Loyalist, that Ferguson was only eight miles in advance. There, too, they had the good fortune to capture a couple of Tories, who, at the peril of their lives, were made to pilot the army to King's Mountain. About noon the rain ceased and cleared off with a fine cool breeze. Five miles farther some of Sevier's men stopped at the house of a Loyalist, from whom they could only gain the information that Ferguson was not far away. As they left a girl followed the riflemen out of the building and inquired, "How many are there of you?" "Enough," was the reply, "to whip Ferguson, if we can find him." "He is on that mountain," she said, pointing to the eminence three miles distant. Gilmer was soon after overtaken at the house of a Tory, quietly sitting at the table eating. Not at all disturbed or thrown off of his guard, he still swore to Colonel Campbell in the presence of the women

of the house that he was a true King's man, and allowed himself to be lassoed and removed to be hanged. Major Chronicle interposed to prevent his execution at the gate, as his ghost might remain to haunt the women, who were in tears. Campbell acquiesced, saying they would reserve him for the first convenient overhanging limb on the road. Once fairly out of sight of the house, Gilmer was released and told the intelligence he had gained. He had learned from the youngest of the women that she had been in Ferguson's camp that very morning and had carried the British commander some chickens; that he was posted on a ridge between two branches, where some deer hunters had a camp the previous autumn. Major Chronicle and Captain Mattocks stated that the camp referred to was theirs, and that they well knew the ground.¹

The officers, now positively informed of Ferguson's position, rode a short distance by themselves and agreed upon a plan of attack. In accordance with the invariable custom of these volunteer parties, the plan was reported to the men for their approval, and was cordially adopted. The plan was to surround Ferguson's army and shoot at them up hill. This had two great advantages. It ran no risk of the Whigs shooting each other, and it was supposed that marksmen in a valley had the advantage of those on a hill. Hunters find that though apprised of this, they often shoot too high when they are above their object. Be that as it may, the result in this battle was that the British bullets whistled over the heads of the Americans, while theirs took deadly effect.² It was a question whether the Whigs were numerous enough to surround the entire ridge on all sides, for they did not know its exact length;

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 227, 230; *Publications Southern Hist. Assoc.*, vol. IV, 338.

² *Mills's Statistics*, 779.



but the scheme was heartily approved by all, and the officers, without delay, began to settle upon the position each corps was to occupy in the attack.

As the Whigs approached within a mile of the enemy, they obtained from one who had been a prisoner with Ferguson and had just been paroled the latest information, with the assurance that the enemy still maintained his position on the mountain. A brief halt was made. Hitherto the men had been marching singly or in squads, as might best suit their convenience. "But little subordination," says Colonel Hill, "had been required or expected." The men were now formed into two lines, two men deep, Colonel Campbell leading the right line and Colonel Cleveland the left. Another council of officers appears to have been held, in which, however, Williams was not permitted to take part, as he was still distrusted in consequence of his recent efforts to mislead the mountain men. The plan of attack to surround the enemy was adhered to. The strictest silence was enjoined.

Draper points out the remarkable circumstance that in the battle about to take place Ferguson was probably the only British soldier present. All the rest on either side were colonists. It was a fight between American Whigs and Tories alone. And now that Dunlap was away, Ferguson's men seem to have been as unobjectionable a class as are ordinarily found in the ranks of an army. Abraham de Peyster, the second in command, was descended from an ancient and influential Knickerbocker family, and entered the Royal service as a Captain in the New York volunteers. Samuel Ryerson, another of Ferguson's captains, was a native of New Jersey, of Dutch descent, and entered the service as a Captain in the New Jersey volunteers. Of the same regiment was Lieutenant John Taylor. Ferguson's adjutant, Anthony Allaire, was of

Huguenot descent, born in New York. Dr. Uzal Johnson, his surgeon, was a native of New Jersey. These colonial troops, Provincials as they were called, were probably as good as those of the British lines now in America, for many of the regular regiments had by this time been recruited in this country. Ferguson had paid great attention to the organization and drill of these men. They were well trained, and he relied largely upon them in consequence of their practised use of the bayonet. For such of his Tory troops as were without that weapon he had provided each with a long knife, made by the blacksmiths of the country and fitted into the muzzle of the rifle. Ferguson's own corps numbered about 100, and the Loyal militia about 1000. The North Carolina Loyalists were under Colonel Ambrose Mills, a brother-in-law of Colonel Fletchall, and numbered about 430 men. The South Carolina Loyalists about 320; it does not appear under whose command. It is supposed, however, that 200 North Carolina Loyalists under Colonel Moore had left the camp the day before on a scout or foraging expedition.

In the confronting ranks there was, however, says Draper, a very different class of men. The Virginians, under Campbell, were a peculiar people, somewhat of the character of Cromwell's soldiery. They were almost to a man Presbyterians. In their homes in Holston valley they were settled in pretty compact congregations; tenacious of their religious and civil liberties, as handed from father to son from their Scotch-Irish ancestors. Their preacher, Rev. Charles Cummins, was well fitted for the times, a man of piety and sterling patriotism, who constantly excited his people to make every needed sacrifice, and put forth every possible exertion in defence of the liberties of their country. They were a remarkable body of men, physically and mentally. Inured to frontier life, raised

mostly in Augusta and Rockbridge counties, Virginia, a frontier region in the French-Indian war, they early settled on the Holston, and were accustomed from their childhood to border life and hardship. They were better educated than most of the frontier settlers, and had a more thorough understanding of the questions at issue between the colonies and their mother country. These men went forth to strike their country's foes, as did the patriarchs of old, feeling assured that the God of battle was with them, and that He would surely crown their efforts with success. Lacey's men, mostly from the present York and Chester counties in South Carolina, were of the same character, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, and so were some of those under Shelby, Sevier, Cleveland, Williams, Winston, and McDowell; but many of these, especially those from Nolachucky, Watauga, and Lower Holston, who had not very long settled on the frontier, were more of a mixed race, somewhat rough, but brave, fearless, and full of adventure.

When the Whig patriots came near the mountain they halted, dismounted, fastened their loose baggage to their saddles, tied their horses and left them under charge of a few men detailed for the purpose, and then prepared for an immediate attack. The force was divided into four columns. The first, or as Shelby designated it, the right centre,¹ was composed of the Virginians under Campbell, 200 men. The second, or left centre, of Shelby's regiment, 120. The third, or right flank column, of Sevier's regiment, 120, McDowell's 90, and Winston's 60, — in all 270, under Colonel Sevier. The fourth, or left flank column, of Cleveland's regiment, 120, Williams's 60, Graham's and Hambright's 50, and Lacey's and Hill's South Carolinians 100, — in all 310, under Colonel Cleveland. The whole party was thus composed of 200 Virginians, 510 North

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), Appendix, 543.

Carolinians, and 100 South Carolinians. The small party of Georgians present served with Williams. The army was divided into two wings. The right centre and right flank columns, numbering together 470, were under the immediate command of Colonel Campbell. The left centre and left flank, numbering 440, were under the direction of Colonel Cleveland. The two wings were thus very nearly equal in strength. The plan of battle was that the two wings should approach upon opposite sides of the mountain and thus encompass the enemy. Cleveland's and Sevier's columns united at the northeast end of the ridge, Campbell's and Shelby's closing together at the southwest.

Before taking up the line of march, Campbell and the leading officers earnestly appealed to their soldiers, to the highest instincts of their natures, by all that was patriotic and noble among men, to fight like heroes, and give not an inch of ground save only from the sheerest necessity, and then only to retrace and recover their lost ground at the earliest possible moment. Campbell personally visited all the corps and said to Cleveland's men, as he did to all, that if any of them, men or officers, were afraid, he advised them to quit the ranks and go home; that he wished no man to engage in the action who could not fight; that as for himself, he was determined to fight the enemy a week, if need be, to gain the victory. Colonel Campbell also gave the necessary orders to all the principal officers, and repeated them so as to be heard by a large portion of the line, and then placed himself at the head of his own regiment, as the other officers did at the head of their respective commands. Many of the men threw aside their hats, tying handkerchiefs around their heads so as to be less likely to be retarded by limbs and bushes when dashing up the mountain.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the columns advanced. Both wings were somewhat longer in reaching their designated places than had been expected. In moving to the attack, Winston's party was thrown into confusion. Some men riding up directed them to dismount from their horses and march up the hill. This was immediately done, but before they had advanced two hundred paces they were again hailed, disabused of their error, and directed to remount their horses and push on, as King's Mountain was yet some distance away. They ran down the declivity with great precipitation without a guide; but fortunately they regained the line at the very point of their proper destination. As the two wings came to the foot of the mountain, that under Colonel Campbell turned to the right and made its way around the southeastern side, while Cleveland's turned to the left and occupied the northwestern side.

There has been some difference between the authorities as to the actual commencement of the action. The tradition has always been, says Dr. Moore in his *Life of Lacey*, that inasmuch as Colonel Lacey rode the express, Colonel Campbell gave him the honor of commencing the battle;¹ and Ramsay intimates that it was begun by Cleveland; but the official report made by Campbell, Shelby, and Cleveland themselves states distinctly that "Colonel Shelby's and Colonel Campbell's regiments began the attack, and kept up a fire on the enemy while the right and left wings were advancing to surround them, which was done in about five minutes, and the fire became general all around."² A picket of the enemy, whose position had been ascertained, was surprised and secured by a party of Shelby's

¹ *The Life of General Edward Lacey*, 17, 18.

² *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), Appendix, 523; Ramsay's *Rev. of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 182.

men without firing a gun or giving the least alarm. From the nature of the ground and thick intervening foliage of the trees, the Whigs were not discovered by Ferguson till within a quarter of a mile, when his drums beat to arms, and his shrill whistle, with which he was wont to summon his men to battle and inspire them with his own courage, was heard everywhere over the mountain.

The right and left wings had been cautioned that the action was not to be commenced until the centre columns were ready for the attack. These were to give the signal by raising a frontier war-whoop, after the manner of the Indians, and then to rush forward to the attack. Upon hearing the battle-shout and the reports of the rifles, the right and left wings were to join in the affray. The first firing was made by the enemy upon Shelby's column before they were in position to engage in the action. It was galling in its effect, and not a little annoying to the mountaineers, some of whom in their impatience complained that it would never do to be shot down without returning the fire; but Shelby restrained them. "Press on to your places," he said, "and then your fire will not be lost."

But before Shelby's men could gain their position, Colonel Campbell had thrown off his coat; and, while leading his men to the attack, he exclaimed at the top of his voice, "Here they are, my brave boys; *shout like H—l, and fight like devils!*" The woods immediately resounded with the shouts of the line, in which they were heartily joined, first by Shelby's corps, and then the cry was caught up and ran along the two wings. Draper relates that when Captain de Peyster heard these almost deafening yells, — the same he too well remembered hearing from Shelby at Musgrove's Mills, — he remarked to Ferguson, "These things are ominous; these are the d—d yelling boys!" Ferguson was himself dismayed when he heard them.



Cleveland and his men, while passing around to the left of the mountain, were somewhat retarded by a low piece of ground there saturated with water from the recent rain; but clearing this, and discovering an advance picket of the enemy, he made the address to his men which is always given when the story of King's Mountain is told, and which the schoolboys fifty years ago were taught to repeat as a part of their exercises. Draper justly observes that this speech, we may conclude, was not delivered in a very formal manner, but most likely by piecemeal, as he rode along the lines.

"My brave fellows, we have beat the Tories, and we can beat them. They are all cowards. If they had the spirit of men, they would join with their fellow-citizens in supporting the independence of their country. When engaged you are not to wait for the word of command from me. I will show you by my example how to fight. I can undertake no more. Every man must consider himself as an officer, and act from his own judgment. Fire as quick as you can. When you can do no better, get behind the trees or retreat; but I beg you not to run quite off. If we are repulsed, let us make a point to return and renew the fight. Perhaps we may have better luck in the second attempt than in the first. If any of you are afraid, such have leave to retire, and they are requested immediately to take themselves off."¹

The distance that Cleveland's men had to march, with the swampy nature of their route, delayed them some ten minutes in reaching the place assigned them. But they nobly made amends for their delay by their heroic conduct in the action. The picket that they attacked soon gave way, and were rapidly pursued up the mountain.

The tradition that Lacey was allowed the honor of beginning the battle, judging from the official report, Draper

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 182-183; *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 248, 249.

holds to be without substantial foundation. But it must be observed that the report was not signed by Lacey, though he represented a distinct corps from a different State, and was therefore entitled to have been consulted in regard to it, or to have made his own. It is remarkable, too, that this official report does not even mention Lacey at all, but erroneously represents Williams as commanding the four hundred men who joined the authors of it on the 6th of October, while it is beyond question that Williams was repudiated by the South Carolinians and commanded only sixty men recruited in North Carolina. But whether Lacey actually commenced the action or not, it is clear that he was among the first engaged. He approached the enemy from the northwestern and most level side of the mountain, and thus drew upon him the attention of the foe, while Cleveland and the other leaders were marching to their respective places to complete the encircling of Ferguson's army.

The part of the mountain where Campbell's men ascended to attack was rough and craggy, the most difficult of ascent of any part of the ridge; but these resolute mountaineers permitted no obstacle to prevent their advance, creeping up the acclivity little by little, from tree to tree, till they were nearly at the top. The Virginians thus securing the summit of the hill, the battle became general. None of the Whigs were longer under the restraint of military discipline; some were on horseback, some were on foot, some behind trees, others exposed; but all were animated with enthusiasm. The Virginians were the first against whom Ferguson ordered a charge of the bayonets by his Rangers and a part of his Loyalists. Some of them obstinately stood their ground till a few were thrust through the body; but without bayonets themselves, with only their rifles to withstand such a charge, the Virginians broke



and fled down the mountain. They were soon rallied, however, by their gallant commander and some of his more active officers, and by a constant and well-directed fire of their rifles they in turn drove back Ferguson's men, and again reached the summit of the mountain. The mountain was covered with flame and smoke, and seemed to thunder. The shouts of the mountaineers, the noise of hundreds of rifles and muskets, the loud commands and encouraging words of the officers, with every now and then the shrill screech of Ferguson's silver whistle high above the din and confusion of the battle, intermingled with the groans of the wounded in every part of the line, is described as combining to convey the idea of another pandemonium.

While Ferguson's Rangers were pushing back Campbell's men with the bayonet, Shelby was pressing Ferguson's Loyalists on the opposite side and southwestern end of the mountain, so that the Rangers were now called upon to turn their attention to this body of the mountaineers. Ferguson soon found that he had not so much the advantage of the position as he had anticipated. The summit of the mountain was bare of timber, exposing his men to the fire of the backwoods riflemen, who, as they pressed up the ridge, availed themselves of the trees on its sides, which afforded them protection while breaking his ranks and retarding his lines in the charge of the bayonet. Sumter's South Carolinians under Lacey and Hill — the veterans of Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock, Camden and Fishing Creek — pressed forward to share in the contest. At the very first fire Lacey's horse was shot from under him. Nor were the other columns idle. Major Chronicle and Major Hambright led their little bands up the northeast end of the mountain, where the ascent was more abrupt than elsewhere — save where Campbell's men

made their attack. As they reached the base of the ridge and began the ascent, Chronicle was killed; but the small party under Hambright, with a disproportionate number of officers for its strength, fought on with determined heroism. Before they reached the crest of the mountain De Peyster charged them with the bayonet. Sevier's column at length gained the summit of the hill, driving the enemy's left flank upon his centre. But they were not subjected to any bayonet charge save a portion of the left, who hastened to the support of Campbell's regiment when hard pressed, and became intermingled with them.

Williams, offended at his treatment and the refusal of the other officers to recognize his right to command, at first refused to take part in the battle; but he could not after all restrain himself, or resist so glorious an opportunity to do his country service, for he was a patriot, notwithstanding that his ambition had led him to improper courses to attain distinction. Wheeling chivalrously into line on the left of Shelby, and exclaiming to his followers, "Come on, my boys—the old wagoner never yet backed out," he rushed into the thickest of the fight. Though his numbers were few, he had several good and experienced partisan officers with him. Brandon, Hammond, Hayes, Roebuck, and Dillard—all, but Roebuck, like him, from Ninety-Six District—had been engaged in the campaigns in the Low Country. These officers, by their intrepid example, did excellent work with their small band recruited in North Carolina. Major Samuel Hammond, with a small squad of brave followers, broke through the British lines; and when the enemy attempted to intercept them, facing about, they cut their way back by dint of the most heroic efforts.

The last time Campbell and Shelby's men were driven down the declivity it was rumored that Tarleton with his horse had come, and they were somewhat confirmed in this

belief by the deceptive shouting on the part of the enemy. This for the moment had a dispiriting effect upon the mountaineers. But Colonel Sevier and other officers rode along the line, calling upon the men to halt, and assuring them that Tarleton was not there, and encouraging them to resist even though he should come. The riflemen, thus reassured, turned and pressed upon the enemy with the utmost firmness and determination. And thus the battle waged with alternate advances and repulses, the columns of Campbell and Shelby having been two or three times driven down the mountain at the point of the bayonet, the last one almost a rout, in which some of them were transfixed with the bayonet while others fell headlong over the cliff. Three times, says Mills, did the Britons charge with bayonet down the hill; as often did the Americans retreat; and the moment the Britons turned their backs, the Americans shot from behind every tree, and every rock, and laid them prostrate.

But at length the two wings of the mountaineers so pressed the enemy on both sides that Ferguson's men had ample employment all around the eminence without being able to repair to each other's relief. The Provincial Rangers and the Loyalists, though led by the brave De Peyster, began to grow weary and discouraged, steadily decreasing in numbers and making no permanent impression upon their tireless opponents. From the southwestern portion of the ridge the Rangers and Tories began to give way, and were doggedly driven by Campbell's, Shelby's, and Sevier's men, and perhaps others intermingled with them.

Ferguson, by this time, had been wounded in the hand, but he was still in the heat of the battle, and with characteristic coolness and daring he ordered De Peyster to reënforce a position about one hundred yards distant; but before they reached it they were thinned too much by the

Whig rifles to render any effectual support. He then ordered his cavalry to mount, with the intention of making a desperate onset at their head. But these only presented a better mark for the rifle, and fell as fast as they could mount their horses. He rode from end to end of his line, encouraging his men to prolong the conflict, and with his silver whistle in his wounded hand, with desperate courage he passed from one exposed point to another of equal danger. But the Whigs were gradually compressing his men, and the Tories began to show signs of yielding. They raised a flag in token of surrender. Ferguson rode up and cut it down. A second flag was raised at the other end of the line. He rode there, too, and cut it down with his sword. Captain de Peyster, his second in command, convinced from the first of the utter futility of resistance upon the position at King's Mountain selected by Ferguson, as soon as he became satisfied that Ferguson would not abandon it and attempt to make his way to the relief for which he had sent to Cornwallis, had the courage to advise a surrender; but Ferguson's proud spirit could not deign to give up to raw and undisciplined militia. When the second flag was cut down De Peyster renewed his advice, but Ferguson declared that he would never surrender to such a d—d set of banditti as the mountain men. At length, satisfied that all was lost and firmly resolving not to fall into the hands of the despised Backwater men, Ferguson with a few chosen friends made a desperate attempt to break through the Whig lines on the southeastern side of the mountain and escape. With his sword in his left hand, he made a bold dash for freedom, cutting and slashing until he broke it. Colonel Vesey Husbonds, a North Carolina Loyalist, and Major Plummer of South Carolina joined Ferguson and charged on a part of the line they thought was vulnerable. They all fell and perished in the effort.

Captain de Peyster, who had succeeded Ferguson in command, perceiving that further struggle was in vain, raised the white flag and asked for quarter. A general cessation of the American fire followed; but this cessation was not complete. Ramsey states that "some of the young men did not understand the meaning of the white flag, others who did knew that other flags had been raised before, and were quickly taken down; and that Shelby called out to them to throw down their guns, as all would understand that as a surrender."¹ Mills states that "few of the Americans understood the signal, and the few that did chose not to know what it meant, so that even after submission the slaughter continued until the Americans were weary of killing."² And Draper adds "that this is a sad confession; but impartial truth demands that the record be faithful, though in this case there is reason to believe that Mills's statement is somewhat exaggerated."³ It was, indeed, a most deplorable condition, into which the warfare in South Carolina had degenerated. From its very nature civil war is more terrible than that between foreign nations. The question of rightful sovereignty, in the contending governments, necessarily involves the question of treason. The foreign invader, when taken prisoner, is asked no question as to his loyalty. He is an enemy — but an enemy with well-defined rights under the laws of nations. But the person taken in a civil war with arms in his hands, has at once to meet the question of his civil status, and to answer upon a charge for treason. True, modern humanity now comes in and demands that when armies are recognized as distinct from mobs, that the rules of civilized warfare shall be observed, and prisoners

¹ Ramsey's *Annals of Tennessee*, 238, 239.

² Mills's *Statistics of So. Ca.*, 770.

³ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 282.

who surrender be entitled to some protection. But this philanthropic sentiment had little sway during the Revolution. The conduct of Sir Henry Clinton and Lord Cornwallis had greatly aggravated the inevitable condition of the strife. Sir Henry's abrogation of the paroles given by the Whigs, and demand for personal service in the Royal cause of all the male inhabitants without regard to their political opinions or previous affiliation, followed up by Lord Cornwallis's order after the battle of Camden and the executions in pursuance of them there under his immediate eye, and the exile of the citizens from Charlestown against their understanding of the paroles accepted by them, all went to spread distrust and hatred, and to exasperate the Whigs. But beyond all this there was the burning desire, no doubt, on the part of the Virginians, whose fellow-countrymen had been slaughtered by Tarleton at the Waxhaws in May, and by the South Carolinians who had come from that scene of carnage, to revenge the cruel massacre. De Peyster might now call out to Colonel Campbell that "it was d—d unfair"; but he should have recollected that Ensign Cruik was cut down by Tarleton's men when advancing with a flag of surrender; the plea for quarter had been then absolutely refused, and prostrate men had been bayoneted on the ground; that Tarleton had on that occasion continued his carnage for full fifteen minutes after the white flag had been raised. And Tarleton was now expected every moment by both the British and the Americans. Would he recognize the surrender if he came? Well might young Whigs now cry out as they did, "Give them Buford's play!"¹ No mercy had been shown to Sumter's men at Fishing Creek, and Major Candler and his Georgians were fresh from the scenes at Augusta.

But though justified, not only by the law of vengeance,

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 282.

but by the demand for a proper retaliation of the atrocities which had been committed by the British and their Tory allies, and as a warning to them for the future, to the honor of the Whig leaders on this occasion the historian can record with satisfaction that the latter were active in their efforts to put a stop to the slaughter, and this though in fact the enemy had not actually laid down their arms. While the subdued Tories were everywhere crying "Quarter! quarter!" "D—n you," exclaimed Shelby, "if you want quarter, throw down your arms!" Saying this, he rushed his horse within fifteen paces of their line, commanding them to lay down their arms, and they should have quarter. The firing was at length stopped. The enemy at this time had been driven into a group of sixty yards in length and less than forty in width, around which the Whigs closed up, forming one continuous circle, which was then doubled and finally became four deep. Colonel Campbell now proposed to his troops three *huzzas for Liberty*, which were given in hearty acclaim, making the woods ring and the hills resound with their shouts of victory.

The action was begun, fought, and ended within an hour.¹ But more blood was yet to be shed. The Whig leaders had just stopped the firing when a small party of the Loyal militia returning from foraging, unacquainted with the surrender, fired on the Whigs. At first it seemed that the prisoners were only threatened with death if the firing should be repeated; but it happened that Colonel Williams, who was riding up at the time, was struck and mortally wounded, either by the foraging party of Loyalists or by some of the prisoners.

Upon this, Colonel Campbell, who was near at hand, fearing that the firing from an outside party might be the pre-

¹ See authorities, *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 296.

cursor of Tarleton's expected relief, and that by the surrendered Tories a bold attempt to escape might be made while the Whigs were measurably off their guard, to inflict summary punishment and at once quell the intended mutiny, ordered the men near him—the men of Williams's and Brandon's commands—to fire. The order was quickly obeyed, and it is said that one hundred more of the imprisoned enemy were killed or wounded. But the probabilities are, says Draper, that those who fired and those who suffered from it were not very numerous. It was, however, says the same author, a sad affair, and in the confusion of the moment its origin and its immediate effects were probably little understood by either party, and doubtless Colonel Campbell himself deeply regretted the order he had given.

The arms were now taken from the prisoners, they were marched to another place, and a strong guard placed around them. The surviving officers surrendered their swords. Ferguson's sword was picked up from the ground where it had fallen when he was killed. His conduct had been most heroic throughout the whole battle. He had two horses killed under him; he himself received a number of wounds, any one of which was mortal, and dropping from his horse, expired while his foot yet hung in the stirrup. He was undoubtedly an able as well as a brave commander, yet in this campaign he was governed by two infatuations, strange under the circumstances. The first was the preëminent importance he attached to the interception of Colonel Clarke's party, allowing himself to subordinate his coöperation with the movements of the main British army to the capture of a small party of fugitives. The second was his selection of King's Mountain as his battle-ground, when he found the Back-water men and Sumter's men gathering against

him — a position which has been condemned by every military critic who has examined it.

The exact strength of the British army at King's Mountain, says Draper, after a very careful examination of all the authorities, can only be approximately determined. Ferguson's Rangers may be set down at 100, though they may have somewhat exceeded that figure. The general estimate is in round numbers 1000 militia of Loyalists, which would make 1100, or 1125 according to the American official report based on the provisions returns of that day. But it is believed that 200 of these were absent on a foraging expedition, a part of whom returning killed Colonel Williams, and caused the slaughter of their friends. But few, if any, of these escaped. It seems quite certain that about 600 men were taken away as prisoners, which would leave the killed and those too badly wounded to be moved probably something over 300. Allaire, however, who was of Ferguson's corps and was one of the prisoners, in his Diary states that "we had 18 men killed on the spot; Captain Ryerson and 32 privates wounded of Major Ferguson's detachment; Lieutenant McGinnis of Allen's regiment of Skinner's brigade killed. Taken prisoners 2 captains, 4 lieutenants, 3 ensigns, and 1 surgeon, and 54 sergeants rank and file, including the mounted men under the command of Lieutenant Taylor. Of the militia 100 were killed, including officers, wounded 90, taken prisoners about 600. Our baggage all taken, of course." This statement, which is probably the most correct, makes the whole British loss, killed 119, wounded 123, and prisoners 664, — in all 906.¹ The American loss was officially reported, killed 28, wounded 62.²

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), Allaire's Diary, Appendix, 510.

² *Ibid.*, 524.

Thus ended the battle of King's Mountain, which turned the tide of war in the Southern States. Rumors were still rife that Tarleton with his dreaded dragoons was coming on to the rescue; so early on Sunday morning, the 8th, the victors, alive to the danger, were making hurried preparations to get away with their prisoners and spoils. Seventeen baggage wagons had fallen into their hands; but they could not encumber themselves with these on the rough and narrow roads they had to travel, so they were drawn by the men across the campfires and burned. Litters were made by fastening two long poles on either side of two horses at tandem, with a space of six or eight feet between them, stretching tent cloths or blankets between the poles on which to lay a wounded officer or soldier. Fifteen hundred stands of arms were captured. The flints having been taken from these, the prisoners were required to carry them. These preparations consumed the morning, so that it was ten o'clock before the march was taken up. Campbell, Shelby, Cleveland, Sevier, Hammond, and Brandon, with the Virginians and North Carolinians guarding the prisoners, left for the mountains in North Carolina.¹ Lacey and Hill, who still commanded Sumter's brigade, remained in the neighborhood and pitched their camps on Bullock's Creek, within six or seven miles of the battle-ground, quietly awaiting the approach of Tarleton, whom they had met before and were not afraid to meet again.²

General Washington proclaimed the result of the battle of King's Mountain in General Orders to the army as an important victory gained, and "a proof of the spirit and resources of the country," while Congress expressed in its resolves "a high sense of the spirited and military conduct

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 320.

² *Moore's Life of Edward Lacey*, 18, 19.

of Colonel Campbell, and the officers and privates of the militia under his command, displayed in the action of October the 7th, in which a complete victory was obtained."¹

A week after the battle, while the Virginians and North Carolinians were encamped at Bickerstaff's, some nine miles northeast of the present town of Rutherfordton, in North Carolina, complaint was made to Colonel Campbell that there were among the prisoners a number who were robbers, house burners, parole breakers, and assassins.² Upon this a mongrel court, partly civil and partly military, was organized, and with little pretence of trial, twelve of the prisoners were condemned to death. Nine were executed, one escaped, the other two were not hanged. Among those who were hanged was Colonel Ambrose Mills, who had commanded the North Carolina Tories in the battle.³ Some, at least, of these no doubt justly met their punishment. But revenge for the British execution of Cusack, and of those at Camden and Augusta, left little play for mercy or even exact justice in their trial.

¹ *King's Mountain and its Heroes* (Draper), 374.

² Draper (*King's Mountain and its Heroes*, 330) states that the complaint was made by "the officers of the two Carolinas." But Lacey and Hill had remained in South Carolina. Williams was dead, and Colonel Brandon, who was then connected with the party of North Carolinians raised by Williams, appears to have been the only officer from South Carolina present, and he was without commission from that State.

³ *Ibid.*, 341.

CHAPTER XXXVI

1780

WHILE Lord Cornwallis lay at Charlotte, Generals Sumner and Davidson with a considerable body of North Carolina militia took post in the vicinity and watched and annoyed his detachments. Colonel Davie, whose corps was greatly increased by stanch volunteers from the lower country, was particularly successful in intercepting their foraging parties and convoys. Riflemen frequently penetrated near the British camp, and from behind trees took care to make sure of their aim, so that the late conquerors found their situation very uneasy, exposed as they were to unseen danger if they attempted to make an excursion of only a few hundred yards from the encampment.¹ Cornwallis was about to send Colonel Webster's brigade to attack Sumner's militia and relieve himself from the annoyance, when confused reports of Ferguson's miscarriage began to reach the British camp.² His lordship had been uneasy about Ferguson's movements. He had not Ferguson's confidence in his trained militia, declaring that Ferguson's own experience, as well as that of every other officer, was totally against his trust in them. This anxiety had increased as time had passed without intelligence from him. But Tarleton, it seems, did not share his lordship's fears, or was indifferent to Ferguson's fate. Cornwallis was

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 186.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 105.

desirous that Tarleton should go to look up Ferguson and aid him if need be ; but Tarleton pleaded weakness from the effects of his fever, and refused to make the attempt, though his lordship used the most earnest entreaties.¹ Collins and Quinn, who had been sent by Ferguson from Tate's on the 30th of September to inform Cornwallis of the approach of the Back-water men, it will be remembered, had been delayed and did not reach him until the 7th of October, the day of the battle. But even after they arrived with Ferguson's appeal for aid, strange to say, Tarleton could not be induced to move until the 10th, when he was ordered by his lordship to march to Ferguson's assistance with the light infantry, the British Legion, and a three-pounder ; no certain intelligence having arrived of his defeat, but the confidence with which it was asserted by the Americans giving weight to the report. Tarleton accordingly marched to a ford below the forks of the Catawba some fifteen or twenty miles, where he received certain information of the melancholy fate of his brother officer. This mortifying intelligence, he says, was forwarded to Charlotte, and the light troops crossed the river to give protection to the fugitives and to attend the operations of the enemy.² When he crossed the Catawba

¹ Cornwallis's correspondence, quoted by Draper, *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, p. 304. Lord Cornwallis in a letter to the Bishop of Litchfield, dated Calcutta, Dec. 12, 1787, resenting the blame which Tarleton lays upon him in his *Campaigns*, says with reference to that work : " Tarleton's is a most malicious and false attack ; he knew and approved the reasons for several of the measures which he now blames. My not sending relief to Colonel Ferguson, although he was positively ordered to retire, was entirely owing to Tarleton himself ; he pleaded weakness from the remains of a fever, and refused to make the attempt, although I used the most earnest entreaties. I mention this as a proof, amongst many others, of his candour." — *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, xvii.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 165-166.

he learned that the mountaineers had all gone, and that Lacey and Hill only remained in the neighborhood. These brave men were, however, boldly and triumphantly standing their ground, defying his Legion and himself. Tarleton manœuvred about their camp two or three days without making an attack.¹ He says that he was adopting measures to dislodge them when expresses from the Royal army prevented his design by requiring his instant return to the Catawba.²

Soon after Tarleton had gone in quest of Ferguson, Cornwallis received positive information of the latter's defeat and destruction ; and his lordship on the 14th of October, that is, as soon as his army could be put in motion, began a most precipitate retreat. Tarleton complains that he had left his baggage with the main army when he was sent on the expedition to find Ferguson, and that in his absence it was committed to the worst wagons and lost. Indeed, owing to the bad condition of the road, the ignorance of the guides, the darkness of the night, or some other unknown cause, the British rear-guard destroyed or left behind near twenty wagons loaded with supplies for the army, a printing-press, and other stores.

One McAfferty, a merchant, a Whig at heart, who had remained in Charlotte to save his property, was required to act as guide. He misled the British, and pretending to have lost his way, and riding aside to find it, escaped.³ Riding all night, he reached Davie's camp and informed him of Cornwallis's retreat. Davie at once started in pursuit, but could find no opportunity to attack. The mud in the Black Jack country in this section, as it is

¹ Moore's *Life of Edward Lacey*, 19.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 166-167.

³ *No. Ca. in 1780-81* (Schenck), 181 ; Hanger's *Reply to McKenzie's Strictures on Tarleton's Campaigns*, 62.

known, especially in that of the Waxhaws, is proverbial for its sticky quality and the depth of its softness in rainy weather. It was then and is now a terror to all travellers. The rainy season had begun, and the roads were almost impassable.¹ It so happened, to add to the difficulties of the situation, that Lord Cornwallis was taken ill with a dangerous fever just as the retreat began. In consequence of his illness, the want of forage and provisions, and the mire in which the army was stuck, the Royal forces remained two days in the Catawba Indian settlement, in what is now Lancaster County, South Carolina, just below the State line. During the illness of Cornwallis, Lord Rawdon assumed command. By the time the army reached Sugar Creek, a small branch of the Catawba which here divides Lancaster from York County, the wagon and artillery horses were already exhausted with fatigue. The creek was very rapid, its banks nearly perpendicular, and the soil, being clay, as slippery as ice. In this emergency the horses were taken out of some of the wagons, and the Loyal militia, harnessed in their stead, drew the wagons through the creek. "We are sorry to say," adds Steadman, "that in return for these exertions the militia were maltreated by abusive language, and even beaten by some officers in the quartermaster general's department. In consequence of this ill usage, several of them left the army the next morning, forever chusing to run the risque of meeting the resentment of their enemies rather than submit to the derision and abuse of those to whom they looked up as friends."²

At length the army reached the Catawba, and crossed from what is now Lancaster into Chester County at Landsford, and marching westwardly crossed Fishing Creek :

¹ *No. Ca. in 1780-81* (Schenck), 181.

² Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 225.

then crossing Rocky Creek at a point two or three miles from the present town of Chester, it turned its direction south, taking the road to Winnsboro, where it arrived on the 29th of October. In the retreat the King's troops are described as suffering much and encountering the greatest difficulties; the men had no tents; it rained for several days without intermission; the roads were over their shoes in water and mud. Sometimes the army had beef and no bread, at other times bread and no beef. For five days it was supported upon Indian corn, which was collected as it stood in the field, five ears of which were the allowance for two soldiers for twenty-four hours. They were to cook it as they could, which was generally done by parching it before the fire. The water the army drank was frequently as thick as puddle, and for many days they were without rum. Few armies, says Steadman, encountered greater difficulties; but the soldiers bore them with great patience and without a murmur, knowing as they did that even Lords Cornwallis and Rawdon's fare was not better than their own.¹ Tarleton, on the other hand, states that the King's troops moved through a plentiful country in the neighborhood of Fishing Creek, whilst measures were employed to find out the most convenient position on the frontier, and that several movements were made before a regular camp was established.² It is very probable that both accounts are respectively correct. Tarleton with his cavalry foraging at will, regardless of the condition of the roads and not circumscribed in his movements by them, found no difficulty in collecting all the supplies he wished. But at the worst, as described by Steadman, the British on this retreat endured only the ordinary fare of the Whigs, who had no stores or sup-

¹ Steadman's *Am. War*, vol. II, 226, 227.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 169.

plies from which to draw. Before the end of October, Earl Cornwallis recovered from his indisposition, and about the same period a proper place of encampment was found. After a minute inquiry and examination, says Tarleton, Winnsboro presented the most numerous advantages for a regular camp. Its spacious plantations yielded a tolerable post; its central situation between the Broad River and the Wateree afforded protection to Ninety-Six and Camden; and its vicinity to the Dutch Forks and a rich country in the rear promised abundant supplies of flour, forage, and cattle. As the army arrived on the ground, the sick were conveyed to the hospital at Camden; rum and other stores were drawn from that place, and communication was opened with Ninety-Six.

As soon as the news of the victory near Camden arrived in New York, Sir Henry Clinton, the Commander-in-chief, in pursuance of the grand plan of carrying the war from South to North, embarked a considerable corps under the orders of Major General Leslie for the Chesapeake, to form a junction with Lord Cornwallis, who, it was not doubted, would now march triumphantly from Camden, and invade and pass through North Carolina.¹ The armies, meeting in Virginia, were to crush the rebellion in that State, and continuing northward were to proceed to the Chesapeake, ready to strike Washington in the rear, while Sir Henry assailed him in front. The plan of this campaign will be

¹ In a note to "Themistocles's" *Reply to Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative*, it is said: "The fact is, that Lord Cornwallis being second in command had never arrogated to himself any privilege beyond his line of duty; he had never offered a plan to Ministry, tho' he had often indeed hinted, with great deference to them and to Sir Henry, the expediency of carrying his Majesty's arms from South to North—an idea the Ministry had long conceived, and were pleased with his Lordship's coinciding with them in." *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, 144; *Tarleton's Campaigns*, 170.

readily recognized as the prototype of that of Grant and Sherman, which brought about the destruction of Lee in the late war between the States.¹ But the series of affairs, culminating in the destruction of Ferguson at King's Mountain, and the uprising under Marion in the Low Country, frustrated the grand scheme at this time. General Leslie's instructions were to obey the mandates of Earl Cornwallis, and his movements were left to his lordship's judgment and absolute direction.² The plan for the winter's campaign having thus been disconcerted by the Americans, and necessarily abandoned by his lordship, instructions were sent to General Leslie first to proceed to Wilmington, and afterwards to Charlestown, where he ultimately arrived, and from thence joined Cornwallis, bringing his lordship a reënforcement now rendered necessary for his own safety. In the meanwhile attention was given to strengthening the British posts. Lieutenant Colonel Turnbull commenced and completed redoubts at Camden. Works were constructed at Colonel Thomson's plantation in Orangeburgh, and at Nelson's Ferry, to secure the communication with Charlestown. At Ninety-Six, Lieutenant Colonel Cruger pressed forward the work, and defences at that place were put in a tenable condition. The troops at Georgetown were employed in the same manner, and were assisted by an armed naval force. Alterations were made in the fortification of Charlestown, the old works were nearly all thrown down, and great improvements were designed and begun under the direction of Major Moncrief, the engineer. These latter, however, fortunately for the Americans, were never completed, and the want of them was subsequently to give great cause of alarm to the British.

¹ Essays in *Military Biography* (by Charles Cornwallis Chesney), 296.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 170.



It will be recollected that a few days before the battle of King's Mountain a delegation had been sent to Governor Rutledge at Hillsboro, remonstrating against Williams's commission, and asking for the appointment of Sumter as Brigadier General, and that it had been agreed that Sumter, in the meanwhile, should retire, thus depriving him of the honor of taking part in the battle of King's Mountain, if not indeed commanding on that occasion. Governor Rutledge at once acceded to the representations of Colonel Winn and his associates, and on the 6th of October issued a commission to Sumter as Brigadier General. With this commission he sent a long letter of instructions to Sumter, putting him in command of all the militia of the State, directing him to embody all he could collect, and hold them in readiness to coöperate with the Continental troops receiving orders for that purpose ; meantime Sumter was to employ the men he should assemble in such manner as would render the most efficient service to the State ; to liberate the people held prisoners by the enemy, many of whom the Governor believed would willingly join the Americans if released. He desired "that all the enemy's outposts to be broken up, and the several parties they have throughout the country cut off. In short, that they be harassed and attacked in every quarter of South Carolina and Georgia where they can be to advantage, and with a reasonable prospect of success." "It will be expedient," wrote Governor Rutledge, "to secure every subject of the State who holds any office or commission under his Britannic Majesty, and not on any account whatsoever to put any persons whom you take that owe allegiance to the State of South Carolina, whatever their rank or condition may be, on parole ; but have them properly confined to be tried as soon as the courts of law can be held for so capital an offence as taking part with the

enemy." The pay of Sumter's men, both horse and foot, was to be that allowed by the militia laws ; and he was especially charged to give the strictest orders and use the most efficient means to prevent the shameful practice of plundering.

Governor Rutledge proceeded to direct : —

"You will animate and encourage our friends by circulating throughout South Carolina and Georgia the following particulars from me, viz. : That our affairs in Europe wear the most favorable aspect. That the campaign to the Northward has been an inactive one, General Clinton not having chosen to venture an action, but having kept his army in New York or places adjacent where neither our troops nor those of his most Christian Majesty, which landed in Rhode Island (consisting of 5000), could get. That considerable aid will soon be sent to the relief of South Carolina and Georgia. I expect advices every day, and I will transmit them to you. That the court of France and Congress are determined to warrant the independence of all the United States of America, and not to listen to any terms of peace which may require the surrender of any of these States."

The Governor then went on to say that it was hoped that the good people of South Carolina and Georgia would, at a proper time, exert themselves in assisting to secure and in supporting their liberties. That it would be necessary from the peculiar circumstances of many of their friends that they should temporize for a while and not as yet take up arms, but that he would expect that they would stand prepared when called on to join the American forces with whom he hoped shortly to enter South Carolina and revenge the injuries it had experienced from both domestic and foreign enemies ; and that all who had been unfortunately compelled to do duty as militia would prove such compulsion, and evince their fidelity to the State in order to show that they had been so compelled. In which case, if they had not been guilty of atrocious crimes, and

if their conduct should warrant it, they might be admitted to the service of their country.¹

General Sumter was thus appointed to the command of all the State forces in South Carolina, but having gone to Hillsboro in the vain effort to obtain some necessaries for the troops, he did not reach Lacey and Hill and take command until about the first of November.² Governor Rutledge also appointed Marion Brigadier General very soon after his appointment of Sumter. Henceforth, therefore, these officers were to conduct their operations under regular commissions, and not by the mere temporary appointment of their followers.

From his camp at Snow Island Marion now traversed the country between the Pee Dee and Santee without opposition, and roused the whole of that section to revolt against the British. Cornwallis reported to Sir Henry Clinton that there was scarcely an inhabitant between the Santee and Pee Dee that was not in arms against them, and that some of Marion's parties had even crossed the Santee and carried terror to the gates of Charlestown.³ Marion's position was thus a constant threat to the enemy's communications between Camden and the town, and from it he retarded the supplies on the way to the British depots, and delayed the march of recruits which had been sent from New York to reinforce Cornwallis's army. So successful and persistent was Marion in this business, that Colonel Balfour found it necessary to send from Charlestown the Sixty-fourth Regiment to Nelson's Ferry to protect the passage of the convoys at that point.⁴ As soon, therefore, as Cornwallis had established himself at Winnsboro, he dispatched Tarleton

¹ Sumter MSS. in the possession of the Misses Brownfield.

² *Life of Lacey* (Moore), 19; McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 338.

³ *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, 188.

⁴ *Steadman's Am. War*, vol. II, 227; *Tarleton's Campaigns*, 171, 200.

to beat up Marion's quarters and to clear his communications of this menace. Tarleton immediately crossed the Wateree and proceeded across the present counties of Kershaw and Sumter into what is now Clarendon County. He proceeded very cautiously, moving in a very compact body, lest the Americans should gain advantage over his patrols or detachments. Marion, whose numbers were, however, greatly exaggerated, as soon as he heard of Tarleton's expedition, moved at once to meet him. Stopping at night on the 10th of November in a wood near where Mr. Charles Richardson lived in Clarendon County, he was about to encamp; but seeing a great light toward General Richardson's plantation, he concluded that the houses of the plantation were on fire, and that Tarleton was there.¹

Marion's supposition was correct. The light he saw was that of the burning of General Richardson's late residence by Tarleton. Upon the fall of Charlestown, General Richardson had given his parole, and upon its revocation by Sir Henry Clinton he had been amongst the foremost in expressing his indignation against the injustice and impolicy of the measure. Lord Cornwallis, learning of this, and fearing his influence against the Royal cause, offered him, it is said, in the presence of his family, the choice either to unite himself to the Royal standard, with any office or title he might wish, or that he must submit to close confinement. These tempting offers and intimidating threats were equally disregarded. General Richardson promptly answered, with great decision, in such dignified terms as to elicit an involuntary expression of respect: "I have from the best convictions of my mind embarked in a cause which I think righteous and just; I have knowingly and willingly staked my life, family, and property

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 61.



all upon the issue. I am well prepared to suffer or triumph with it, and would rather die a thousand deaths than betray my country or deceive my friends." The alternative was promptly and rigorously enforced; his health declined under the joint influence of a sickly climate and a loathsome prison-house; the infirmities of old age (then in his seventy-sixth year) increased rapidly, and death was so evidently approaching that he was sent home in September, to linger out the last remaining hours of his life at his family residence. His remains had been interred but a short time before Tarleton occupied the establishment. He ordered the body of General Richardson, it is said, to be taken up, and left it exposed until, by the entreaties of his family, they were permitted to reinter it. His pretext for this act of barbarity was that he might examine the features of a man of his decided character; but the true object was, it was believed, to ascertain if the family plate had not been buried in his grave. All the property of the estate which could not conveniently be taken for his Majesty's service or the gratification of his officers, was wantonly and sedulously destroyed. Provisions and houses were all burnt; stock of all descriptions slaughtered or driven away; negroes captured, until little or nothing was left but the dwelling house. Tarleton, having first been in the house and helped himself to the abundant good cheer it afforded, in person directed the torch to be applied to it, and the widow and three children of General Richardson were only rescued from the flames by the humanity of one of his officers.¹

While Marion was deliberating what was to be done, Colonel Richard Richardson, the eldest son of General Richardson, who had himself just escaped from confinement by the British on John's Island, and was just

¹ Johnson's *Traditions*, 161, 162; James's *Life of Marion*, 63.

recovering from the smallpox, came in and informed him that by the light of the fire he had been able to form a correct estimate of the strength of Tarleton's command. From this information Marion ascertained that Tarleton's forces were at least double his own numbers, with two field-pieces. To add to Marion's consternation he at the same time discovered that one of his best guides had deserted to the enemy. Knowing that Tarleton now had a guide, and that he was in danger, he immediately retreated, and crossing in the darkness the Woodyard, then a most difficult swamp, he did not stop until he had passed Richbourn Mill-dam on Jack's Creek, distant about six miles. Having now a mill pond and miry swamp between him and the enemy, he halted, saying, "Now we are safe."¹

Tarleton, learning from the deserter of Marion's approach, prepared to receive his attack, but at length, unable to account for the slow advance of the Americans, dispatched an officer with a few men to reconnoitre, who soon ascertained Marion's retreat. Upon receiving this report, Tarleton immediately started in pursuit and continued, he says, for seven hours through swamps and defiles.² The next morning Marion continued his retreat down Black River for thirty-five miles, halting about ten miles above Kingstree in a position of strength. Tarleton had found Marion's trail across the Woodyard, but had not attempted to follow it; instead he had gone round in a circuit of about twenty-five miles, when arriving at a wide and miry swamp without a road to pass it he had desisted. It was at this time he is reported to have used the expression which has ever since characterized the two generals, Sumter and Marion, "Come, my boys! let us go back, and we will soon find the game-cock (Sumter); but as for this

¹ James's *Life of Marion*, 62.

² Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 172.

d—d *old fox*, the devil himself could not catch him.”¹ He claimed, however, that he would soon have brought Marion to action, had not an express from Earl Cornwallis overtaken and recalled him. Some prisoners fell into his hands.²

When Lord Cornwallis abandoned Charlotte and fell back to Winnsboro, General Smallwood, who had commanded a brigade in Gates’s disastrous expedition, and who had now been commissioned by the State of North Carolina, collected a force of several thousand militia under Generals Jethro Sumner, William L. Davidson, and Allen Jones, and took post at Providence, about six miles south of Charlotte.³ Colonel Davie with 300 mounted infantry advanced to Landsford on the Catawba toward the British right,⁴ and Sumter having assumed command as Brigadier General moved his camp with 425 men to Fishdam Ford on Broad River, twenty-eight miles from Winnsboro toward the British left. These positions had been taken in consequence of a plan concocted between Smallwood and Sumter while he was in North Carolina, by which Sumter was to manœuvre near the British army at Winnsboro and endeavor to draw off a considerable detachment from Cornwallis in pursuit of him, while Smallwood was to strike at the main army with the remnants of Gates’s Continentals and the North Carolina militia. Smallwood, however, having received information that General Greene was soon to be expected to take command of the Southern army, did not coöperate according to his engagement. Sumter commenced the move.⁵

On the 7th of November Sumter crossed the Broad at Fishdam Ford from what is now Union, into Chester

¹ James’s *Life of Marion*.

² Tarleton’s *Campaigns*, 172.

³ *No. Ca. in 1780-81* (Schenck), 185.

⁴ Wheeler’s *Hist. No. Ca.*, 190. ⁵ McCall’s *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 238.

County. From Fishdam Ford the road to Charlotte runs eastward, and on the right there was a plantation fence along the road for half a mile, from the end of which the Winnsboro road leads out to the right. On the left of the road the ground was open for 200 yards from the river, and partially enclosed by a fence; then a hill of woodland with thick undergrowth began and continued 200 yards farther along the margin of the road, and thence the high ground diverged to the left. On the left, about 250 yards from the road, a deep gully made out from the river, running nearly parallel to the road along the left of the high ground. General Sumter's tent was pitched on the left of the road at the ford. Colonel Richard Winn's troops, 125 in number, were encamped on the General's left, and upward along the river. Colonel Thomas Taylor's were encamped along the gully on the left of Winn, and Colonels Lacey, Bratton, and Hill's troops, upwards of 300 men, were encamped on the high ground in the thick wood, about 350 yards in front. During the day of the 8th Colonels Twiggs and Clarke and Majors Candler and Jackson of Georgia with about 100 men from that State came in; and in the evening Colonel McCall with a party from Long Cane in Ninety-Six District joined the camp. These reënforcements occupied the ground between Winn's and Taylor's commands. On the morning of the 8th Colonel Taylor with 50 men was ordered to proceed toward Winnsboro to reconnoitre the country and gain intelligence of the enemy's movements. During the day Sumter called his field officers into council. They advised him to retire over Broad River, but this he declined to do. Taylor returned about midnight, without having gained any information.¹

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 338, 340.

Lord Cornwallis had received information as to Sumter's position from the people in the neighborhood, for this was in the Mobley settlement, where most of the inhabitants were Tories. His information was in consequence very exact, even to the position of every corps in the encampment, and he had the best guides to conduct him to the different points. Under these circumstances his lordship laid a plan to surprise Sumter, the execution of which he committed to Major Wemyss, who with his regiment, the Sixty-third, had come across the country from their marauding expedition on the Pee Dee, and had now joined the army at Winnsboro. Wemyss had brought with him a sufficient number of horses, which he had plundered from the Whigs, to mount a considerable part of his regiment. This body of mounted infantry, with an officer and forty men of the Legion who had been left at headquarters when Tarleton had been sent after Marion, composed the force with which Wemyss was intrusted to execute his lordship's plan. So minute was the information they possessed, that an officer with five men were especially detailed to penetrate the camp and attack Sumter himself in his tent.

On the evening of the 8th Wemyss, furnished with guides, moved toward Fishdam. The rapidity of the march brought him to the American post sooner than he expected. A delay till daybreak, which was the time intended for the attack, he thought would discover him to Sumter, who might take the opportunity to escape. He determined, therefore, to make the attempt without loss of time.¹ Fortunately Sumter's officers, who, it appears, were uneasy at the situation, were on the alert. Colonel Winn suggested to some of them the probability of the enemy's attempting a surprise, and he took the pre-

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 173.

caution to require his men to keep up good fires during the night, and sleep on their arms in rear of their fires. He also wisely pointed out the ground on which they were to form in case of attack. Colonels Twiggs and McCall had taken similar precautions, but their ground was not so well calculated for defence.¹ At one o'clock in the morning Major Wemyss, at the head of his corps, charged the picket. Out of five shots fired by the American picket two of them took effect in the arm and knee of the British commanding officer. Sumter was in a profound sleep, and his orderly neglecting to awaken him on the first alarm, the British party assigned to that service were at his tent before he could put on his coat. He ran out, leaped the fence, and escaped by the river bank. As soon as the American picket fired, the British advanced in full charge into the camp; but when the dragoons reached the fires before Winn's command, perceiving no enemy, and blinded by the light, they paused. This gave Winn's troops a clear view of them, upon which they took deliberate aim and fired. The dragoons themselves, thus surprised, wheeled about, and on their retreat they killed a young man by the name of Sealy, a Loyalist, who had been a prisoner and liberated the day before. The British infantry had dismounted, and now formed and advanced near the fires. As they did so Winn, having formed his men behind the fence, and Twiggs and McCall partially so, opened their fire, which was briskly returned for a short time, when the enemy charged with bayonets; but the fence obstructing their movements, and receiving a heavy fire from the Americans, they fell back, when they were met by Taylor, advancing on their flank, who gave them a heavy fire. After an action of twenty minutes the British infantry

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 340.



remounted and retreated. Lacey's, Bratton's, and Hill's corps did not fire a gun, fearing that they would kill their friends, as the action was close and the night very dark. McCall, who gives the most circumstantial account of the battle, says the British loss was considerable; Major Wemyss was badly wounded; about twenty more were killed and the ground strewn with their wounded. A surgeon, who was sent with a flag to take care of these, declared when he returned to Winnsboro that he had never seen so much injury done by so few troops in so short a time since he had been in America.¹ Tarleton states that the British had nearly twenty officers and men killed and wounded.²

Upon the result of this affair, Cornwallis immediately sent an express to Tarleton, and wrote, saying: "Major Wemyss attacked Sumter at Fishdam at one o'clock this morning, contrary to his plan, which was to wait until daylight; the consequence is that Wemyss is wounded and left, and about twenty men. Lieutenant Hoveden is wounded, but I believe the Legion has not lost much. Must beg you to return immediately, leaving some horses for mounting men at Camden. I am under the greatest anxiety for Ninety-Six, and trust that you will lose no time in returning to me."³ It was this urgent message which recalled Tarleton from his pursuit of Marion.

Wemyss, who was severely wounded, was taken prisoner, and in his pocket, as we have before mentioned, was a list of the houses he had burned in Williamsburg and on the Pee Dee; with great trepidation he showed it to Sumter, and begged he would protect him from the militia. Sumter threw the paper in the fire, and notwithstanding the brutality with which Wemyss had personally

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 342.

² *Ibid.*, 200, note.

³ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 174.

superintended the execution of Mr. Adam Cusack and his many other atrocities, he was protected and treated with indulgence, indeed with kindness ; but he became a cripple for life.¹

General Sumter, the day after the fight at Fishdam, recrossed the Broad River, and moved down through what is now Union County to one Niam's plantation on the Enoree.² Here he appears to have concerted with Colonel Clarke of Georgia an attack upon Ninety-Six,³ of which Lord Cornwallis had written he was so apprehensive. From the Enoree he again moved southerly, through the present Laurens County, and menaced the camp established by Ferguson at Williams's plantation on Little River ; but the British declined to quit their works and come out to battle.⁴ Indeed, Cornwallis reports that had Sumter at once attacked the camp, he would have met with little resistance.⁵

Upon the recall of his commander-in-chief, Tarleton had hurried back, and with such celerity had he marched that he had arrived in his neighborhood before Sumter had even heard of his advance. On passing the Wateree, he received instructions from Cornwallis to lead the light troops to Brierley's Ferry⁶ on the Broad, where he would find the first battalion of the Seventy-first and a detachment of the Sixty-third Regiment. This latter regiment, after its defeat at Fishdam, had not yet returned to Winnsboro when it was directed to proceed to meet Tarleton. Before reaching the ferry, Tarleton received further

¹ Ramsay's *Revolution of So. Ca.*, vol. II, 189 ; James's *Life of Marion*, 73 ; Gregg's *Old Cherokees*, 306 ; Johnson's *Life of Greene*, vol. I, 317, note.

² McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 343.

³ *Memoirs of the War of 1776* (Lee), 205.

⁴ McCall, *supra*.

⁵ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 204.

⁶ Afterwards Shirer's and then Strother's Ferry.

orders from Cornwallis to pass the river with the Legion, the light infantry, and the Sixty-third, and to cut off Sumter, who, he was told, was moving against Ninety-Six. Care was taken to conceal the green uniform of Tarleton's Legion from the American picket, which occupied the opposite bank, in order to throw them off their guard and continue their belief in the absence of the British Legion on the expedition against Marion. On the evening of the 18th Tarleton received information of Sumter's position before the camp at Williams's plantation, with a force represented as one thousand strong. At daybreak the next morning Tarleton started with light troops, taking the direction of Indian Creek, a branch of Enoree, through what is now Newberry County, and marching all day with great diligence, encamped at night with secrecy and precaution near that river. Another day's movement was intended up the banks of the Enoree, which would have placed him directly in the rear of Sumter at Williams's plantation. Sumter's surprise was frustrated by a deserter from the Sixty-third Regiment, who, at twelve o'clock that night, carried him the information of Tarleton's approach.¹ Upon this Sumter fell back, moving up the country, and took post at Blackstock on the south side of Tyger River in Union County, sixty miles from Winnsboro and thirty-five miles from Fishdam Ford on the Broad River.²

Blackstock was a large tobacco house, built of logs, long and narrow and of two apartments of eighteen feet square, with eighteen feet space between and a roof or wall. In the rear of the house, a few hundred yards, was the crossing place of the Tyger River; midway from the house to the river was a hill, sloping down from the right, nearly parallel with the house, and terminating at the

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 175-176.

² McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 343.

road. The house was on a second elevation below the hill, with open woodland forming a half moon with its concave to the front. The road led from the river by the right of the house, and, passing its front, descended through the field about one hundred yards to a small rivulet. Near the road to the right was low brushwood, and on the left a field with a fence extending a quarter of a mile in a straight direction where the road divided. The field on the left made a right angle at the house, and the fence ran directly to the left to the low grounds of the river. On the right of the road, opposite to the end of the house, was a small pole building. On the second elevation, in the rear of the house and parallel thereto, General Sumter encamped his troops, and expecting that he would be attacked, he assigned to each corps its position. Colonel Henry Hampton was directed to occupy the house with his troops. Colonel Twiggs of Georgia, the senior officer under General Sumter, assisted by Colonel Clarke and Majors Candler and Jackson with the Georgia troops, was to occupy the fence and woodland to the left of the house. Colonels Bratton, Taylor, Hill, and McCall were to occupy the right of the house with their right formed on the curve of the rising ground. Their corps was to be commanded by the General in person. Colonel Lacey was directed to cover the right, and Colonel Winn to occupy the hill as a corps of reserve. Colonel Chandler had been detached on the march to collect provisions. General Sumter's force consisted of 420 men.¹

Tarleton had continued his pursuit at dawn of the 20th, and before ten o'clock had information of Sumter's retreat. On reaching a ford on the Enoree, where he expected to gain further intelligence or to come up with the Americans, he found that Sumter had passed the

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, 343, 344 ; *Life of Lacey* (Moore), 22.

river nearly two hours before. He states that a detachment to cover the rear was waiting there the return of a patrol, and that the advanced guard of the British dragoons charged this body and defeated them with considerable slaughter.¹ The facts, as given by McCall, were that Captain Patrick Carr with a few men had been ordered to reconnoitre, and had taken prisoners three unarmed Loyal militia and two boys, who had been to the mill. Carr was conducting these men to camp when Tarleton's advance guard came upon them. Carr gave them a shot and fell back to the main body, leaving the prisoners and mill boys behind. These poor fellows were killed by Tarleton's men, and constituted the party he reported defeated "with considerable slaughter."² Tarleton pressed on with his whole force until four o'clock in the afternoon, when, apprehending that Sumter would pass the Tyger River unmolested before dark, he left his Legion light infantry to march at their own pace, whilst he made a rapid pursuit with 170 cavalrymen of the Legion and eighty mounted infantrymen of the Sixty-third Regiment.³ Colonel Chandler, with his forage wagon, had just passed Sumter's picket when the picket fired on Tarleton's van. Taylor, with his party and wagons, ran in with the pickets and were closely pursued by the British dragoons when they entered the camp.⁴

Tarleton immediately advanced to the attack, as he came up with Sumter at Blackstock before five o'clock in the evening. Upon receiving the fire of the American picket, he ordered his infantry to dismount, and with the cavalry made a rapid charge through the field on the Georgians under Colonel Twiggs. The British infantry advanced,

¹ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 176. ² McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 345.

³ Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 176, 177.

⁴ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 345.

and Sumter, leading on Bratton, Taylor, Hill, and McCall to the attack, gained their flank.¹ Colonel Lacey's mounted infantry advanced to the west side through a thick wood, within seventy-five paces of the enemy, undiscovered, when with a well-directed fire twenty men and nearly as many horses fell. Tarleton's cavalry were afraid to enter the thick wood to get at Lacey's troops, but pressed forward through the lane, where they fell so thickly that their numbers, dying and dead, blocked up the road.² Meanwhile the Sixty-third was roughly handled. The part of the hill to which their attack was directed was nearly perpendicular, and their left was exposed to the log house into which Hampton's men had been thrown and from which, as the apertures between the logs served them for loopholes, they fired with security. Tarleton, repulsed, fell back with his cavalry, but re-formed, returned to the charge, and thus continued, directing his chief efforts to turn the American left; he had nearly succeeded in doing this when Colonel Winn advanced to the support of the Georgians. Tarleton was again compelled to retire with precipitation, and was pursued by a party under Major James Jackson, which took upwards of thirty horses. Sumter unfortunately had been disabled. While engaged in leading on the attack from the right, he was shot in the right shoulder. He requested his aide-de-camp to put his sword into the scabbard and to direct a man to lead off his horse. "Say nothing about it," he directed, "and request Colonel Twiggs to take command." The action closed, leaving the Americans in possession of the field.

Colonel Twiggs directed the enemy's wounded to be collected, and as many of them as could be sheltered were laid in the houses. Supposing that Tarleton would renew

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 344.

² *Life of Lacey* (Moore), 23.



the action with his increased force when the Seventy-first Regiment and the Legion and light infantry came up, Twiggs ordered the troops to retreat and cross the Tyger River, where they would be unassailable. He left Colonel Winn with the command on the battle ground until night; where Winn caused a number of fires to be lighted up as of an encampment, and then safely crossed the river. There was an extraordinary difference in the casualties occurring between the two parties. Of the British, the American authorities claim that ninety-two were killed and one hundred wounded, among the former Major Moneys and Lieutenants Gibson and Cope. Tarleton admits a loss of but fifty-one. Of the Americans one was killed and three wounded, including Sumter.¹

Tarleton, as usual, claimed the result of the action as a victory, and so reported it to Earl Cornwallis, and his lordship allowed it as such. On the 23d of November he writes to Tarleton : —

“I have no doubt but your victory will be attended with as good consequences to our affairs as it is with honor and credit to yourself; *I shall be very glad to hear that Sumter is in a condition to give us no further trouble; he certainly has been our greatest plague in this country.*”

Sumter's wound prevented him from annoying them during the remainder of his lordship's sojourn in South Carolina; but he was soon again to be in the field, as great a plague to the British as ever. Cornwallis accepted Tarleton's claim of victory in the action at Blackstock, but subsequent English historians have refused to recognize it as a success to the British army. McKenzie in his *Strictures* on Tarleton's work demonstrates that it was

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 346; *Life of Lacey* (Moore), 23; Tarleton's *Campaigns*, 179-180.

not ;¹ and sober British authorities have ceased to claim it as a success. Steadman adopts McKenzie's account. He says that it was compiled from the concurrent testimony of several officers present in the action, and it has been preferred to Tarleton's own account because his claim of victory is evidently inconsistent with some other circumstances which he admits, — particularly this, that he did not gain possession of the field of action until the next morning, after it had been quitted by the Americans in the night.²

On his retreat to Winnsboro Tarleton made captive a number of old men and stout boys, and carried them to headquarters as trophies won in the recent action ; many of his captives, however, proved their loyalty to the King, and obtained their liberty ; the others were doomed to a tedious imprisonment in Camden jail. A victory in these times could scarcely pass without a hanging, and as Tarleton claimed Blackstock as a victory on his part, he must celebrate it by an execution ; so he hanged Mr. Johnston, a respectable man and the father of a numerous family of young children.³

The Whigs, soon after the battle, crossed over the Tyger, and the part of the army raised for the occasion was disbanded. Colonel Lacey kept the field with his mounted infantry. He established his camp and headquarters at Liberty Hill on Turkey Creek in what is now York County, from which position he greatly annoyed the enemy by cutting off his foraging parties.⁴ Colonel Clarke and Lieutenant Colonel McCall determined to press on in the movement on Ninety-Six. This district, since the surrender of Charlestown, had been less disturbed by the operations of the war than any other in

¹ *Strictures on Tarleton's Hist.*, 75.

² *McCall's Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 348.

³ *Steadman's Am. War*, vol. II, 231.

⁴ *Life of Lacey* (Moore).

the State, except in the Low Country to the south of Charlestown. The British post at Ninety-Six, under Lieutenant Colonel Cruger, was indeed the only one which had not been assailed by the patriot forces. The conduct of Williamson and the strict view which Pickens had taken of the binding force of the parole he had given had the effect of preventing any uprising of the people in this section; but the unexampled cruelties and pillage which had been practised and encouraged by the British had drawn many into arms, however unwillingly. The best-affected settlement to the cause of independence in the neighborhood of Ninety-Six was that of Long Cane. To this Clarke and McCall turned their attention for recruits to their force and to annoy the enemy about Ninety-Six.

After resting a few days near Berwick's, or Wofford's, Iron Works, they advanced by an upper route toward Long Cane early in December, and on their way were joined by Colonel Benjamin Few of Georgia, with a part of the refugees from that State. Colonel Few assumed the command. The position of their encampment was favorable for the increase of their numbers, and the prospect was flattering that in a short time they would be sufficiently strong to confine the British within their stronghold. Colonel Cruger, who commanded at Ninety-Six, aware of the consequences which would result from permitting Few to remain unmolested in his position, determined to attack him in camp, and hoped to take him by surprise. On Sunday, the 10th of December, Cruger dispatched Lieutenant Colonel Allen with two hundred regular troops, two hundred Loyalists, and fifty dragoons. Marching about twenty miles, they halted on Monday afternoon, the 11th,¹ within three miles of Few's camp before he was aware of their approach. Colonel

¹ *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, December 23, 1780.

Clarke, Lieutenant Colonel McCall, and Major Lindsay were ordered by Few to meet the enemy, commence the action, and sustain it until the main body could be brought up to their assistance. Clarke, McCall, and Lindsay advanced about a mile and a half, and, dismounting, tied their horses within one hundred yards of the enemy's front, which was composed of Loyal militia. These they at once engaged, and the action became lively. They had attacked so quickly that the regular troops were but just formed when the action began. In about ten minutes the Loyalist militia retreated; some of them fled, and the remainder formed in the rear of the regular troops. Clarke sent an express to Few to hasten the march of the main body, and with his troops advanced on the regulars, delivering a fire which wounded some of them. Unfortunately, just at this juncture, he received a wound in his shoulder, which was at first supposed to be mortal, and was carried from the field.

Colonel Allen received the advancing Americans with a fire and the bayonet, and brought up the Loyalists he had rallied on the American flank. About this time McCall was also wounded and his horse killed. The horse falling upon him, McCall narrowly escaped with his life. Major Lindsay also was wounded. All their leaders having thus fallen, the Americans retreated and were charged by the enemy's dragoons. Major Lindsay, who had received three wounds, was sabred upon his head and arms, and one of his hands was cut off by Captain Lang of the dragoons, as he lay on the ground. Fourteen Americans were killed, and several others who were wounded and unable to make resistance were slain on the ground where they lay. The atrocities of Tarleton's massacre of Buford's men at the Waxhaws were thus repeated on a smaller scale. The killed amounted to fourteen, and the wounded who escaped with

life to seven. The British claimed to have killed and wounded about sixty. They admitted a loss of three wounded.¹

When the remains of Colonel Clarke's command returned to the camp, they found Colonel Few and the main body of troops under orders for retreat and ready to move off, without having given any previous intimation to those in advance. Some harsh observations were made by some of the officers who had been engaged, relative to Few's conduct, whether justly on that occasion is not certain. He had previously given proof of courage and good conduct. He justified himself by saying that the intelligence he had received after Colonel Clarke was engaged induced a belief that the force of the enemy was so far superior to his own that it would have been imprudent to have met them in a general engagement. But this surely did not justify him in withholding from Clarke notice of his intentions, or in making an effort to secure his retreat. The whole American force was about 500, the British 450.² But 100 of the Americans were actually engaged.

On the 13th of January, 1781, Congress adopted the following resolution :³—

“Congress taking into consideration the eminent services rendered to the United States by Brigadier General Sumter of South Carolina at the head of a number of volunteer militia from that and the neighboring State, particularly in the victory obtained over the enemy at Hanging Rock on the 6th of August, in the defeat of Major Wemyss and the corps of British Infantry and dragoons under his command at Broad River on the 9th day of November, in which the said Major Wemyss was made prisoner, and on the repulse of Lieutenant Colonel Tarleton and the British cavalry and infantry under his command at Blackstock on Tyger River on the 20th of November last, in each of

¹ McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 349, 350; *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, December 23, 1780.

² McCall's *Hist. of Ga.*, vol. II, 350, 351.

³ Sumter MSS.

which actions the gallantry and military conduct of General Sumter and the courage and perseverance of his troops were highly conspicuous.

"Resolved, therefore, that the thanks of Congress be presented to Brigadier General Sumter and the militia aforesaid for such reiterated proofs of their patriotism, bravery, and military conduct which entitles them to the highest esteem and confidence of their country and that the commanding officer of the Southern department do forthwith cause the same to be issued in general orders and transmitted to General Sumter."

The district of Ninety-Six had thus far, in a great measure, escaped the ravages of the war. Colonel Cruger's wise conduct, his gentle yet firm course, had held quiet the people in that section, who were indeed generally loyal to the King; and in this he had doubtless been aided by the rigid regard which Colonel Pickens had persistently held to the parole he had given. The example of Pickens's conduct, in inflexibly adhering to what he considered that his honor required in maintaining his word, had doubtless influenced the conduct of others who might have been inclined more lightly to regard the obligations of theirs. But fortunately for the cause of his country, just at this critical time a raid was made by Dunlap upon Pickens's plantation, his house plundered, his family insulted, and his friends and neighbors alike ill treated. This violation of the protection which had been pledged him when he had given his parole, he regarded as releasing him from its reciprocal obligations. Sending word to Colonel Cruger of his determination, against the advice and entreaty of the British officers whose friendship he had won during his parole, he now took the field and brought to the cause of liberty the great weight of his high character. The story of his advent to the American cause, the particular circumstances of his coming, as well as his subsequent distinguished career, belong, however, more appropriately to the coming campaign under General Greene, of which we shall hereafter tell.



CHAPTER XXXVII

1780

THE year 1780, so memorable in the history of South Carolina, though devoid of activity, was not without incident in the Northern States. Sir Henry Clinton had hurried from Charlestown to New York to avoid the French fleet, and had reached that port in safety a month before the fleet appeared on the coast. On the 18th of July Washington received intelligence of the arrival on the 12th at Newport of the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, with land and naval forces from France. The naval force consisted of eight ships of the line, two frigates, and two bombs, and upwards of five thousand men.¹ Although it was now midsummer, the French commander found the American forces unprepared for active and offensive coöperation. In anticipation of the arrival of the French auxiliaries, Washington had in vain endeavored to obtain from Congress some assurance of the strength of the reënforcements upon which he could rely. In this he was seconded by the French Minister, who addressed Congress on the same subject, and transmitted the answers he received to the Commander-in-chief. To the French Minister Congress stated at large the measures they had taken to recruit the new army and to obtain supplies of provisions. The present weakness of their military force was attributed principally to the

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VII, 113.

fall of Charlestown, to a diversion of a large portion of it to the Southern Department, and to the heavy losses sustained from fatigue and desertion during a long and tiresome march.¹

Writing to the President of Congress on the 18th of November, 1779, Washington had submitted an abstract taken from the muster rolls of the troops of each State in October (South Carolina and Georgia excepted), containing a return not only of the whole strength of each, and of the independent corps at that time, but of the different periods for which they stood engaged. From this return it appeared that the whole force amounted to 27,099, of which 410 were invalids, 14,998 were engaged for the war, and the terms of enlistment of the remainder would expire at different periods during the succeeding year. It was no doubt true, as Washington went on to observe, that it could not be supposed the whole of this number were either actually in service or really in existence, as the amount of an army on paper would always exceed its real strength.² But allowing for all such inaccuracies and proper deductions, there could scarcely have remained less than 25,000 men properly on these rolls. And this was indeed the number Congress assured the French Minister they could bring into the field.³ Granting, however, that the troops sent to the South were to be deducted from this estimate, to what did these amount? There had been sent to Lincoln the North Carolina brigade under Hogan, which when it passed through Philadelphia numbered 700, the Virginia line, which, including those whose terms of enlistment would shortly expire, and who were retained by Washington, was supposed to amount to over 3000

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 249.

² Washington's *Writings*, vol. VI, 402.

³ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 248.

men;¹ but of which only 1950 reached the Southern Department, to wit: Colonel Heth's corps 400, the remains of Bland's and Baylor's dragoons under William Washington 100, and of Moylan's under Colonel White, Woodford's brigade, 700, Buford's 350, and Porterfield's 400. Then Gates and De Kalb had brought the Maryland and Delaware lines and Continental artillery numbering 1500. So the diversion of the army to the Southern Department, which Congress represented to the French Minister as the cause of the smallness of Washington's force, took away in all but 4150 men, which should have left to the Commander-in-chief considerably over 20,000 from the Northern States to oppose the garrison of New York and its dependencies, which in January were supposed to be reduced to 10,000 or 11,000 effectives,² and which in April did not in fact exceed 8000 men,³ nor after the return of Sir Henry Clinton from South Carolina in June 12,000 regulars.⁴ But Washington had not near so many as 20,000 men left after sending off the reënforcements to the South.⁵ Though the winter was so severe that the Hudson was frozen, and Lieutenant General Knyphausen, left in command of the garrison at New York during the absence of Sir Henry Clinton and Lord Cornwallis, was thus exposed to attack by the American army crossing the ice, Washington

¹ Lincoln's *Letter to Washington*, *Year Book of the City of Charleston*, 1897 (Smyth), 355.

² Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 197.

³ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VII, 23.

⁴ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 232.

⁵ By General Knox's report the whole number of troops furnished in the ten States during the year 1780 (*i.e.* excluding the Carolinas and Georgia) was 21,015. Deducting those of Delaware (325), Maryland (2065), and Virginia (2486), in all 4866, there should still have remained 16,149 of the Northern States under Washington's command. Not all, however, of the troops of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia had been sent to the South.

was too weak to take advantage of the favorable circumstance. Indeed, he was so weak that on the contrary he was subjected to the humiliation of an invasion of the Jerseys by the reduced British garrison, and the burning of the flourishing settlement known as the Connecticut Farms, six miles from Elizabeth, as well as the village of Springfield. By a return of the whole army under Washington's immediate command, made on the 3d of June, there did not appear to be present and fit for duty more than 3760 men rank and file.¹

The reduction of Washington's army to an inferiority to that of the British, even after their larger detachments to the South, was owing to causes much more serious than the diversion of a part of it to meet the British invasion in South Carolina. The truth is, that the American cause was at a lower ebb at the North when the French allies arrived than even in South Carolina, which had been overrun in every section by British troops. In South Carolina, as the invaders swept over the State, they converted friends into foes, and patriots and heroes arose in every direction to renew the struggle against oppression. At the North, except in the immediate vicinity of the armies, there was languor, indifference, and unwillingness to longer contribute men or supplies. To so low an ebb, indeed, had the tide of American affairs fallen in this year, 1780, that, as has before appeared, Lord George Germain could write from Whitehall exultingly to Sir Henry Clinton, that by the return of the Provincial forces in the King's service he had transmitted it appeared that more Americans were enlisted in her Majesty's cause than were en-

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 228. At this time the British Provincial forces—that is, troops raised in America—amounted to 8954. *So. Ca. in the Revolutionary War* (Simms), 55, quoting State Paper Office.

listed in the Continental army to fight for the rights and liberties of America.¹

The emission of the full sum of \$200,000,000 in Continental bills of credit, which Congress had solemnly resolved not to exceed, had been completed in November, 1779, and was entirely expended. The requisitions in the State to replenish the treasury by taxes had not been fully complied with, and had they even been strictly observed, would by no means have produced a sum in any degree equal to the public expenditure. It became therefore necessary to devise other measures which should afford the means of carrying on the war. During the distresses which brought the army almost to the point of dissolution, these measures were under consideration. As early as December, 1779, it had been determined to change the mode which had been adopted for supplying the army by purchases, and instead to make requisitions of specific articles in the several States. In this, Congress was but seeking to avoid its own responsibility and endeavoring to cast it upon the individual States. Nor could this change be brought into immediate operation. The legislatures of the several States by which it was to be adopted and carried into execution were, many of them, not then in session. A greater part of the summer must necessarily therefore pass away before supplies could thus be obtained. In the meantime, until a new scheme of finance could be adopted, there being no regular fund to be certainly relied on for the support of the army, a desperate scheme of raising money was devised. Mr. Jay, who had succeeded Henry Laurens as President of Congress, had been sent at the end of the year 1779 as plenipotentiary to Spain, where he landed in January, 1780; and Congress was now about to send Henry Laurens to Amsterdam

¹ *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, 335.

to negotiate a commercial treaty with the Netherlands. Without waiting to learn whether Mr. Jay would be received at Madrid, or even for the departure of Mr. Laurens upon his mission, bills to the amount of £100,000 sterling, payable at six months' sight, were directed to be drawn on these gentlemen, and were sold in small sums on pressing occasions. Loan offices were also opened in the several States for borrowing from individuals.¹ Mr. Jay was not recognized at Madrid, and the bills drawn on him were a source of great annoyance and embarrassment in his mission. Mr. Laurens did not reach his destination. He was captured on his voyage, taken to England, and thrown into the Tower of London. Another financial scheme was adopted on the 18th of March, which was nothing more than a second essay to substitute credit for money, unsupported by solid funds, and resting solely on public faith. But neither could this go into operation until sanctioned by the legislature of the several States, many of which were yet to convene; and when they should meet, they would surely add their own emissions to the new currency of Congress.

Expecting assistance from France, Congress determined upon the establishment of the army for the campaign of 1780 at 35,211 men; the raising of these men was of course left to the States, which were called upon to bring them into the field by the first day of April. Washington, though disapproving, was unremitting in his endeavors to render the plans of Congress as perfect in detail as possible, and to give to their execution all the aid which his situation enabled him to afford. But his efforts and appeals were unavailing. New Jersey, in which the largest division of the army was stationed, although much exhausted, exerted herself, and her quota of supplies was promptly furnished. She

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 209.

availed herself, however, of the provision of Congress in regard to the furnishing of supplies, "That any State which shall have taken the necessary measures for furnishing its quota and have given notice thereof to Congress shall be authorized to prohibit any Continental quartermaster or commissary from purchasing within its limits."¹ This most extraordinary measure of Congress, by which it disabled itself from procuring its supplies in the open markets of any States which should undertake to provide its quota, operated most disastrously, as might have been expected. It was obvious that the demand in any State, which should become the theatre of war, would be much greater than its quota in the general apportionment, and experience had shown that transportation of specific articles from distant places was always difficult and expensive, and sometimes impossible. New Jersey did her duty so far as furnishing the proportionate supplies demanded of her; but her legislature passed an act prohibiting, under severe penalties, the purchase by the staff of the Continental line of provisions within her borders, and declined authorizing its own agents to provide for any emergency, however pressing.² The supplies furnished by New Jersey afforded but a temporary relief, and when they were exhausted, the army was again distressed for food. The supplies for the forage department failed, and a great proportion of the public horses perished or became unfit for use. No means were possessed for the purchase of others, and General Greene, the quartermaster general, found himself unable to transport provisions from distant magazines to the camp. In this dire distress Washington was reduced to the necessity of calling for voluntary contributions under the penalty of military impressment—a measure little short of using the army against its own people.

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 205.

² *Ibid.*, 207.

The want of food and transportation were not the only difficulties. Others of a serious nature also presented themselves. The pay of an officer, says Marshall, was now reduced by the depreciation of money to such a miserable pittance as to be unequal to the supply of the most moderate demands. The pay of a major general would no longer have compensated an express rider, and that of a captain would not have furnished the shoes in which he marched when leading his company against the enemy. Many of the officers had expended their own means in supplying themselves with decent apparel; and those who possessed none could rely only on the State to which they belonged for such clothing as the State might be willing or able to furnish. These supplies were so insufficient and so unequal as to produce the most extreme dissatisfaction. In the lines of some of the States the officers in a body gave notice of their determination to resign on a given day, if some decent and certain provision should not be made for them. Upon the appeal, however, of Washington, they offered to serve as volunteers until their successors should be appointed, and on the absolute rejection of this proposition, they were with difficulty induced to remain in service.

Among the rank and file the condition of things was even worse. The first efforts made toward the close of the campaign of 1776, to enlist troops for the war, had in some degree succeeded; so that, as has been seen, in October, 1779, there were very nearly fifteen thousand men upon the rolls enlisted for the war. In some of the States, especially in Pennsylvania, a considerable portion of these had been engaged upon but small bounties. But as the war went on, and it became more difficult to obtain recruits, the States had actually bidden against each other in the amount of bounty for soldiers. The result was, as of

old, that those who had hired themselves for a penny a day complained bitterly when eleventh-hour recruits were put into their ranks at bounties which, while in the then state of the currency were really of no great value, appeared nominally to be immense. These considerations induced many to appeal to the civil courts to relieve them from their engagements, and many to desert.

A committee of Congress, having visited the army, reported that they found it unpaid for five months; that it seldom had more than six days' provisions in advance, and was, on several occasions, for several successive days, without meat; that it was destitute of forage; the medical department insufficiently supplied; that every department was without money and without even the shadow of credit; that the patience of the soldiers, borne down by the pressure of complicated sufferings, was on the point of being exhausted. Upon this report, a resolution was adopted that Congress would make good to the line of the army and to the independent corps the deficiency of their original pay, which had been occasioned by the depreciation of the Continental currency. This resolution, which was published in general orders, produced a good impression for a while; but promises for the future could not supply the pressing wants of the present. For a considerable time the troops received only from one-half to one-eighth of a ration of meat, and at length were for several days without any. All this caused relaxation of discipline, and the minds of the soldiers became soured to such a degree that their discontent broke out into actual mutiny.

Two regiments, belonging to Connecticut, on the 25th of May paraded under arms, with a declared resolution to return home or to obtain subsistence at the point of the bayonet. The soldiers of the other regiments, though

they did not actually join the mutineers, showed no disposition to suppress the mutiny. By great exertions on the part of the officers, aided by the appearance of a neighboring brigade of Pennsylvania, the leaders were secured, and the two regiments brought back to their duty. This mutiny, though put down, disclosed a serious and alarming condition of affairs. When reminded of the resolution of Congress for making good in future the loss sustained by this depreciation of the currency, of the reputation acquired by their past good conduct, and of the great objects for which they were contending, they answered that their sufferings were too great to be longer supported, that they wanted present relief, and must have some present substantial recompense for their services. A paper was found in the brigade, which appeared to have been brought by some emissary from New York, stimulating the troops by artful insinuations to the abandonment of this cause on which they were engaged. It was a knowledge of the existence of these discontented and mutinous spirits in the American army which induced General Knyphausen to cross from Staten Island to invade New Jersey, and to burn the Connecticut Farms and Springfield.

The mutiny of the Connecticut troops took place on the 25th of May, that is, nearly two weeks after the fall of Charlestown and two days before the slaughter of Buford's men at the Waxhaws. The Continental army of the South was in captivity; that of the North was in mutiny. Dark, indeed, for the American cause were the long days in June, 1780.

There was a temporary break, however, in the overhanging clouds. The Marquis de La Fayette had returned from France, which he had revisited in the interest of the struggling States. He arrived late in April at

Boston in a French frigate, and hastened to Washington's headquarters. Thence he proceeded to Congress, with the information that his most Christian Majesty had consented to employ a considerable land and naval armament in the United States for the ensuing campaign. The Marquis bringing this intelligence was received with joy and affection, and some new impulse was given to both Congress and the State legislatures; but the proceedings of the States were slow and far from producing the reënforcements required. It was not until June and July that the legislatures of the respective States passed the acts which were required to bring into the field a force competent for the great objects now contemplated. In the meanwhile the army was reduced in June, as has appeared, to considerably less than four thousand men, and Washington remained uninformed of the force on which he might rely to coöperate with the expected allies from France. He had hoped that his own army would be so reënforced by the time of the arrival of the French fleet that an attempt might be made on New York before Sir Henry Clinton's return from South Carolina. But in this he was disappointed. Sir Henry returned with about four thousand troops from Charlestown before the French fleet appeared. It was then determined that the armament from France should on its arrival disembark at Newport in Rhode Island and there wait until a more definite plan of operation could be concerted. While Washington was still awaiting the action of the States, his army, in July, being increased by not more than one thousand men, intelligence was received that a large French fleet had been seen between the capes of Virginia; and General Heath, who commanded there, was directed to make every preparation for their reception and accommodation in Rhode Island.

On the 10th of July, in the afternoon, the fleet appeared in sight of Newport. The ships stood into the harbor, and, upon landing, the commander was put into possession of all the forts and batteries in and about Newport. Profiting by the experience at Savannah of a divided command, De Rochambeau, the French commander, was placed by his government under the command of General Washington, and the French troops were to be considered as auxiliaries only. Every effort was made to prevent friction or jealousies between the two armies. It was first proposed to employ the joint forces in an attempt to recover New York ; but for this it was assumed that a decisive naval superiority was essential. Without it nothing could be effected. The 5th of August was named as the day on which the French troops should reëmbark, and the Americans assemble at Morrisiana for the expedition. In further consideration of a former experience, it was settled as a preliminary to any undertaking that the fleet and army of France should at all events continue their aid until the enterprise undertaken should be successful, or be abandoned by mutual consent. The disaster before Savannah, which, says Marshall, had been a prelude to all the calamities in the South, most probably suggested this precaution.¹

The French squadron commanded by Chevalier de Ternay was decidedly superior to that of Admiral Arbuthnot, who lay in New York with only four ships of the line and a few frigates. But three days after De Ternay had reached Newport, Admiral Graves arrived with six British ships of the line, and thus the superiority at sea was entirely reversed. This change of circumstance caused the abandonment of the plan against New York. On the arrival of Graves, Arbuthnot put out from that harbor, and, learn-

¹ *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 257.

ing that De Ternay had reached Rhode Island, immediately proceeded thither. De Ternay dared not attack him, and the French army and navy, from which so much had been expected, were confined to Newport, where they remained "bottled up," as it has since been expressed, for nearly a year, while the war was waging in the South. De Ternay was at first hopeful of relief by the coming of a second division of the French fleet; but, instead, Admiral Rodney had appeared in September with eleven British ships of the line and four frigates, disconcerting all the plans of the allies, and enabling Sir Henry Clinton in security to send Leslie to Virginia to coöperate with Cornwallis in South Carolina. Then had followed the treason and escape of Arnold and the capture of Major André, who this time had not been so lucky in his venture into the enemy's lines as he had been during the siege of Charlestown.

General Washington, during the fall, continued his efforts to induce Congress to provide a permanent military force or a regular system of filling the vacant ranks with drafts who should join the army on the first day of January in each year, but Congress was not only unable but unwilling to do so. A committee of coöperations, of which John Mathews of South Carolina was chairman, had been several months with the army, consulting with the Commander-in-chief and devising schemes for its reorganization. But so strong was the opposition to anything like a standing army that the fact of their sojourn with the army, instead of entitling the views of the committee to consideration, rendered them unpopular with some of the members, who charged them with being "too strongly tinctured with the *army principles*."¹ There were two parties in Congress: one which entered fully into the views of the Commander-

¹ Washington's *Writings*, vol. VII, 226.

in-chief ; the other, jealous of the army and apprehensive of its hostility to liberty when peace should be restored, was unwilling to give it stability by increasing its numbers.¹ On the one hand, it is clear from Washington's letters from the beginning to the end of the war, echoed also by Greene, that he underrated the value and efficiency of a volunteer force ; that his dependence was entirely upon a regular army of enlisted and paid soldiers. He placed little or no reliance upon the patriotism of a private soldier. He desired a strong army to establish a government. So his friends in Congress were for founding and maintaining a strong and permanent army ; while on the other hand those who were jealous of the existence of an army, fearing that if independence from England was established by such a body that it would be the groundwork upon which a monarchy perhaps would be erected, contented themselves with opposing and thwarting all efforts to strengthen it, while proposing nothing themselves upon which to carry on the war.

The allied armies, Continental and French, went into winter quarters without a battle having been fought — the former in such a condition of discontent as again to break out in open meeting in the first of the coming year.

Writing to John Mathews on the 23d of October, informing him of the appointment of Greene, who had declined longer to act as Quartermaster General of the army, to the command of the Southern Department, Washington observed : " You have your wish in the officer appointed to the Southern command. I think I am giving you a general, but what can a general do without men, without arms, without clothing, without shoes, without provisions ? " ² Let us compare the results of the two sys-

¹ Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. IV, 292.

² Washington's *Writings*, vol. VII, 277.

tems upon which the struggle for liberty had been carried on North and South, during this year 1780, in which the Southern States were regarded as conquered ; and sum up what had been done in South Carolina, not only without enlisted or paid men, without arms, without clothing, without shoes, without provisions, but without even a general!

There had been fought in South Carolina during this year in all thirty-four battles, great and small,¹ including as one the siege of Charlestown, which lasted from the 20th of March, when the British fleet crossed the bar and passed Fort Moultrie, to the 12th of May, — that is, fifty-three days. So that during this year, while the Continental army under Washington was lying around New York in hopeless inactivity and discontent, and the French fleet and army cooped up harmlessly in Newport, there had been actual and active fighting in South Carolina for eighty-six days out of the three hundred and sixty-five, or about one day in every four. The siege of Charlestown, and the accompanying affairs of Salkehatchie, Pon Pon, Rantowle's, Monck's Corner, and Lenuds's Ferry, Buford's defeat at the Waxhaws, and the battle of Camden, were battles and engagements in which Continental troops were engaged ; the other twenty-six actions were fought entirely by volunteer bands of the people organized under leaders for each special occasion, the unpaid men of the Carolinas and Georgia of whose names, even, there was no muster roll or record. The scene of these engagements covered, under Marion, the Horrys, and James, the whole country between the Pee Dee and Santee ; under Sumter, Davie, Bratton, Lacey, Hill, Taylor, and the

¹ Three more considerable affairs were yet to take place in December, 1780, but they more properly belong to Greene's campaign of the next year, in our history of which they will be told. These were Rugeley's Mills, December 4 ; Hammond's Store, December 20 ; Williams's Plantation, December 31.

Hamptons, that principally between the Catawba and the Broad, but extending into Lancaster on the one side, and Spartanburg and Union on the other; while Williams, Clarke, and McCall extended it from the Broad to the Savannah. In addition to these engagements which took place in South Carolina during the year, there had been fought just beyond the line in North Carolina the battles of Ramsour's Mill, Charlotte Town, and Cowan's Ford, and in Georgia the siege of Augusta. But restricting the examination for the present to the operations in South Carolina alone, the following statistical table of the engagements which took place within the limits of the State will best illustrate the magnitude and importance of the results accomplished by the uprising of the people themselves without the aid of Congress. The engagements marked in Roman letters were those in which the Continental troops took part. Those in italics were fought by the partisan bands alone.

	Engagement.	Date.	AMERICAN.			BRITISH.		
			Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.	Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.
		1780						
1	Salkehatchie	Mar. 18	21		21	2		2
2	Pon Pon	" 23	10	4	14	3		3
3	Rantowle's	" 26				7		7
4	Monck's Corner	Apr. 12	33		33	3		3
5	Siege of Charlestown	Mar. 20-May 12	258	5683	5941	267	20	287
6	Lenuds's Ferry	May 18	35		35	2		2
7	Waxhaws, Buford's Deft.	" 29	263		263	19		19
8	Williamson's Plantation	July 12	1		1	85		85
9	Brauden's Camp	" 12	1		1			(routed)
10	Stallions's	" 12				6	28	34
11	Cedar Springs	" 13						(several)
12	Gowen's Old Fort	" 14				4	32	36
13	McDowell's Camp	July 15 and 16	38		38	8		8
14	Flat Rock	July 20	4		4	10		10
15	Thicketty Fort	" 30					94	94

	Engagement.	Date.	AMERICAN.			BRITISH.		
			Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.	Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.
		1780						
16	<i>Hunt's Bluff</i>	Aug. 1				100		100
17	<i>Rocky Mount</i>	" 1	6		6	12		12
18	<i>Hanging Rock</i>	" 1				50		50
19	<i>Hanging Rock</i>	" 6	100	10	110	150		150
20	<i>Old Iron Works</i>	" 8	14		14	50		50
21	<i>Port's Ferry</i>	" 15				30		30
22	<i>Camden or Wateree Ferry</i>	" 15				7	100	107
23	<i>Camden</i>	" 16	850	1220	2070	313	11	324
24	<i>Fishing Creek</i>	" 18	150	310	460	16		16
25	<i>Musgrove's Mills</i>	" 19	13		13	153	70	223
26	<i>Nelson's Ferry</i>	" 20	2		2	183		183
27	<i>Kingstree</i>	" 27				15	15	30
28	<i>Black Mingo</i>	Sept. 14	50		50	60		60
29	<i>Tarcote</i>	" 14				26		26
30	<i>Wahub's Plantation</i>	" 20	1		1	60		60
31	<i>King's Mountain</i>	Oct. 7	90		90	242	664	906
32	<i>Fishdam</i>	Nov. 9	2		2	21		21
33	<i>Blackstock</i>	" 20	4		4	192		192
34	<i>Long Cane</i>	Dec. 11	21		21	3		3
	Total		1967	7227	9194	1816	1317	3133

In examining this table it will appear that there was no great difference in the losses in killed and wounded during this time in the two armies, the Americans having lost 1967 and the British 1816,—the small difference of 151 being in favor of the British,—while in prisoners the Americans lost 7227, the British but 1317. This is in some measure accounted for by the number claimed as soldiers taken in arms by the British upon the fall of Charlestown and who are thus described by General Moultrie : —

"The next day," that is the day after the surrender, "the militia were ordered to parade near Lynch's pasture and to bring all their arms with them, guns, swords, pistols, &c., and those that did not strictly comply were threatened with having the grenadiers turned in among them; this threat brought out the aged, the timid, the disaf-

fect, the infirm ; many of them had never appeared during the whole siege, which swelled the number of militia prisoners at least three times the number of men we ever had on duty. I saw the column march out and was surprised to see it so large, but many of them we had excused from age and infirmities ; however, they would do to enroll on a conqueror's list." ¹

Among these doubtless were included the two hundred addressers to Sir Henry Clinton, who declared themselves loyal subjects. But however this may have been, it will be observed that the great losses of the Americans took place in the siege and fall of Charlestown, the massacre of Buford's party in the Waxhaws, the battle of Camden, and the surprise at Fishing Creek. The first three of these were instances in which Continental officers commanded. Indeed, upon an analysis of these figures some curious facts will appear. The following table will show the casualties in both armies which occurred in battles in which Continental troops engaged the British : —

	Engagement.	Date.	AMERICAN.			BRITISH.		
			Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.	Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.
1	Salkehatchie (Lincoln)	1780 Mar. 18	21		21	2		2
2	Pon Pon (Lincoln)	" 23	10	4	14	4		4
3	Rantowle's (Lincoln)	" 26				7		7
4	Monck's Corner (Lincoln)	Apr. 12	33		33	3		3
5	Siege of Charlestown (Lincoln)	Mar. 20-May 12	258	5683	5941	267	20	287
6	Lenuds's Ferry (Lincoln)	May 18	35		35	2		2
7	Waxhaws, Buford's Deft. (Lincoln)	" 29	263		263	19		19
8	Camden (Gates)	Aug. 16	850	1220	2070	313	11	324
	Total		1470	6907	8377	616	31	647

The regularly organized armies under the Continental generals, Lincoln and Gates, lost in killed and wounded

¹ Moultrie's *Memoirs*, vol. II, 106-107.

1470 men, and in prisoners 6907, in all 8377. The British lost in the engagements with these generals 616 killed and wounded and 31 prisoners, in all 647. In these battles the British had obtained the great advantage in killed and wounded of 854, and in prisoners taken of 6876, in all of 7730. The next table will show how much the partisan leaders had done to correct this balance : —

	Engagement.	Commander.	Date.	AMERICAN.			BRITISH.		
				Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.	Killed and wounded.	Prisoners lost.	Total.
			1780						
1	Williamson's Plantation	Bratton, Lacey	July 12	1		1	85		85
2	Brandon's Camp	Brandon	" 12	1		1			(routed)
3	Stallions's	Brandon	" 12				6	28	34
4	Cedar Springs	Thomas	" 13						(several)
5	Gowan's Old Fort	Jones	" 14				4	32	36
6	McDowell's Camp	McDowell	" 15, 16	38		38	8		8
7	Flat Rock	Davie	" 20	4		4	10		10
8	Thicketty Fort	McDowell	" 30					94	94
9	Hunt's Bluff	Gillespie	Aug. 1					100	100
10	Rocky Mount	Sumter	" 1	6		6	12		12
11	Hanging Rock	Davie	" 1				50		50
12	Hanging Rock	Sumter and Davie	" 6	100	10	110	150		150
13	Old Iron Works	Clarke and Shelby	" 8	14		14	50		50
14	Port's Ferry	Marion	" 15				30		30
15	Camden or Wateree Ferry	Sumter	" 15				7	100	107
16	Fishing Creek *	Sumter	" 18	150	310	460	16		16
17	Musgrove's Mills	Shelby, Clarke, and Williams	" 19	13		13	133	70	223
18	Nelson's Ferry	Marion	" 20	2		2	183		183
19	Kingstree	Marion	" 27				15	15	30
20	Black Mingo	Marion	Sep. 14	50		50	60		60
21	Tarcote	Marion	" 14				26		26
22	Wahub's Plantation	Davie	" 20	1		1	60		60
23	King's Mountain	Campbell	Oct. 7	90		90	242	664	906
24	Fishdam	Sumter	Nov. 9	2		2	21		21
25	Blackstock	Sumter	" 20	4		4	192		192
26	Long Cane	Clarke	Dec. 11	21		21	3		3
	Total			497	320	817	1200	1286	2486

* Fishing Creek, in which so great a loss to the Americans occurred, is placed in the list of battles by partisan corps because the party was commanded by Sumter, and composed mostly of his men; but Colonel Woolford and four hundred Continental Infantry were with the party.

From the 12th of July — that is, the day after the French fleet and army had arrived at Newport, when Bratton and Lacey had surprised and destroyed the British party under Huck at Williamson's plantation — to the affair at Long Cane on the 11th of December, that is, in five months, the partisan bands in South Carolina under their own chosen leaders had fought twenty-six battles, inflicting a loss upon the British forces of 1200 in killed and wounded and 1286 in prisoners, in all of 2486, at a loss to themselves of but 497 killed and wounded and 320 in prisoners, in all of 817; that is to say, they had killed, wounded, and taken prisoners of the enemy more than three times as many as the enemy had of themselves. It was this uprising of the people of North and South Carolina and Georgia, aided in one instance, that is at King's Mountain, by a party of Virginians, that after the battle of Camden had detained Cornwallis in the Waxhaws, and then at Charlotte forced him back from Charlotte to Winnsboro, and necessitated his change of Leslie's movements, requiring Leslie to come to Charlestown and thence to his own support instead of attempting, as was intended, the junction of the two armies in North Carolina or Virginia. The British plan of campaign for this year, which will be readily recognized, as we have observed before, as the prototype of that of the winter of 1865 during the late war between the States, was thus disarranged and broken up by the partisan bands in South Carolina. The French army and fleet blockaded in Newport, Washington lay with the discontented, and at times mutinous, skeleton of an army in New Jersey, while the naval superiority of the British in American waters enabled them to reënforce Cornwallis from the Chesapeake, as Terry reënforced Sherman from Wilmington in 1865. Could Cornwallis have made his anticipated triumphal march from Camden

to Virginia, there joined by Leslie, he would have had but to march upon Baltimore, the objective point of the campaign, and thence to Philadelphia,¹ and Washington, between Sir Henry Clinton in New York and the British army advancing from Philadelphia, must have fallen as Lee did between Grant and Sherman. Time was all-important; for the British now had the naval command of the American shores, but another French fleet was hoped for by the Americans, and feared by the British. If this should come—as come it did the next year—and recover the command of the waters, then Rochambeau would be released, and Sir Henry Clinton confined to New York as Rochambeau now was to Newport. To detain Cornwallis in South Carolina, therefore, until the other French fleet arrived, was of the utmost importance to the American cause. To detain him here and break up the plan of junction with Leslie across North Carolina, was the salvation of the country. This the voluntary uprising in the extreme Southern States, and the partisan battles fought in South Carolina, accomplished. Leslie's army of 2300 men, with which he arrived in Charlestown in December, did not quite replace the 2486 whom the partisan soldiers had killed, wounded, and taken.²

¹ Sir Henry Clinton writes to Lord Cornwallis June 1, 1780, "Our first object will probably be the taking post at Norfolk or Suffolk, or near the Hampton Road, and then proceeding up the Chesapeake to Baltimore." — *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, 214.

² Colonel Chesney of the British army, in his essay on "Cornwallis and the Indian Services," in passing thus comments on this campaign of his illustrious kinsman: "From the day . . . that Britain lost the control of the ocean, which divided her from her revolted colonies, the war could have but one result. A success on Cornwallis's part in Virginia might have added to his laurels already gained in New Jersey and the Carolinas, but would only have delayed the issue for a little space. Such a free communication as the Federal fleets had along the coast of the revolted States during the Civil War, was equally needed in our case."

South Carolina had in 1780 suffered already more than any other State; but her cup of woe was not yet full. She was overrun, and her soil from the mountains to the seaboard was wet with the blood of her sons, some of which had been fratricidally shed; but she was not conquered. The war had not been brought on by her leaders; they had been imperceptibly drawn into it. The people of the section in which most of these battles had taken place, and in which it now was most ruthlessly waged, had been opposed to it. But the victorious British army in the year 1780 had converted to the cause of America thousands who would not follow the leaders in the Revolution. The people who stood listless and indifferent to the appeals of Tennent in 1775, had left their fair fields in the Waxhaws on the Catawba and on the Broad and were now following Sumter. Those who had resented Drayton's proclamation, were now coming out under Pickens.¹

Without it Sherman's overland march from Savannah, made eighty years afterwards, might have had little better issue than that of Cornwallis through precisely the same district. With such aid this modern commander established his fame, as the elder, for lack of it, came nigh to ruin his reputation."— *Military Biography*, by Colonel Charles Cornwallis Chesney, Colonel in the British army, etc. (1874), 296.

¹ Lord Cornwallis writes to Sir Henry Clinton on the 3d of December, 1780: "Bad as the state of our affairs was on the northern frontier, the eastern part was much worse. Colonel Tynes, who commanded the militia of the high hills of Santee, who was posted on Black River, was surprised and taken, and his men lost all their arms. Colonel Marion had so wrought on the minds of the people, partly by the terror of his threats and cruelty of his punishments, and partly by promise of plunder, that there was scarce an inhabitant between the Santee and Pee Dee that was not in arms against us; some parties had even crossed the Santee, and carried terror to the gates of Charlestown."— *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, vol. I, 304.

Again on January 6, 1781, his lordship writes to Sir Henry: "The difficulties I have had to struggle with have not been occasioned by the



Charlestown, the only city in America to endure a British siege during the war, was now occupied by British troops and ruled by Balfour, an officer who reserved his valor for the oppression of defenceless men, unprotected women, and innocent children. But Balfour could not quell the spirit of his prisoners, however much he might curtail their liberties and despoil them of their property. Henry Laurens was in the Tower of London, Christopher Gadsden was in a dungeon in the Castle at St. Augustine, whither forty-three other principal citizens of the State had been sent in exile in August, and where in November twenty-two more had been added to their company.¹

The sword, the torch, the gallows, dungeon, and exile, far from subduing the spirit of the people, were uniting them in resistance. In the beginning of the year Sir Henry Clinton had found divisions among all classes and in almost every household. The militia of the country would not come in to the defence of the town. But his

opposite army. They always keep at a considerable distance, and retire on our approach. But the constant incursions of refugees, North Carolinians and back mountain-men, and the perpetual risings in the different parts of the province, the invariable successes of all these parties against our militia, keep the whole country in continual alarm, and render the assistance of regular troops everywhere necessary. Your Excellency will judge of this by the disposition of the troops which I have the honor to enclose to you." — *Ibid.*, 315.

¹ The names of these were : Joseph Bee, Richard Beresford, Benjamin Cudworth, John Berwick, Henry Crouch, John Splatt Cripps, Edward Darrell, Daniel de Saussure, George A. Hall, Thomas Grimball, Noble Wimberly Jones, William Lee, William Logan, Arthur Middleton, Christopher Peters, Benjamin Postell, Samuel Prioleau, Philip Smith, Benjamin Waller, James Wakefield, Edward Weyman, and Morton Wilkinson. With these were also sent General Rutherford and Colonel Isaacs of the State of North Carolina. Colonel Joseph Kershaw was sent to the British Honduras, and Captain Ely Kershaw to Bermuda, but died en route from New Providence to Bermuda. *So. Ca. and Am. Gen. Gazette*, Dec. 18, 1780.

conduct and that of his successor, Lord Cornwallis, had produced a violent revulsion of sentiment. The advent of Pickens, with his solemn message to the British rulers, was an indication of the ultimate result of the conduct they had pursued. Rather than submit to the arrogance of Balfour, the licentiousness of Hanger, the cruelty of Wemyss and of Tarleton, those who had before been indifferent to the American cause prepared themselves to challenge the penalties of Cornwallis's vengeful proclamations.

Thus ended alike the year and the campaign of 1780. The new year is to be full of equally stirring events, and for two more is the war to continue on Carolina soil. The coming campaign in the South is to be conducted on the American side by General Nathanael Greene, who has now assumed command in the Southern Department, in the place of the unfortunate Gates. Of this campaign much has already been written, but all in eulogy of that officer. There is another side we think to this, however, which should be presented in justice to the partisan leaders of South Carolina and their gallant bands, and this we shall attempt in another volume, which is necessary to complete the *History of South Carolina in the Revolution*.



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